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INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

MARCH, 1994

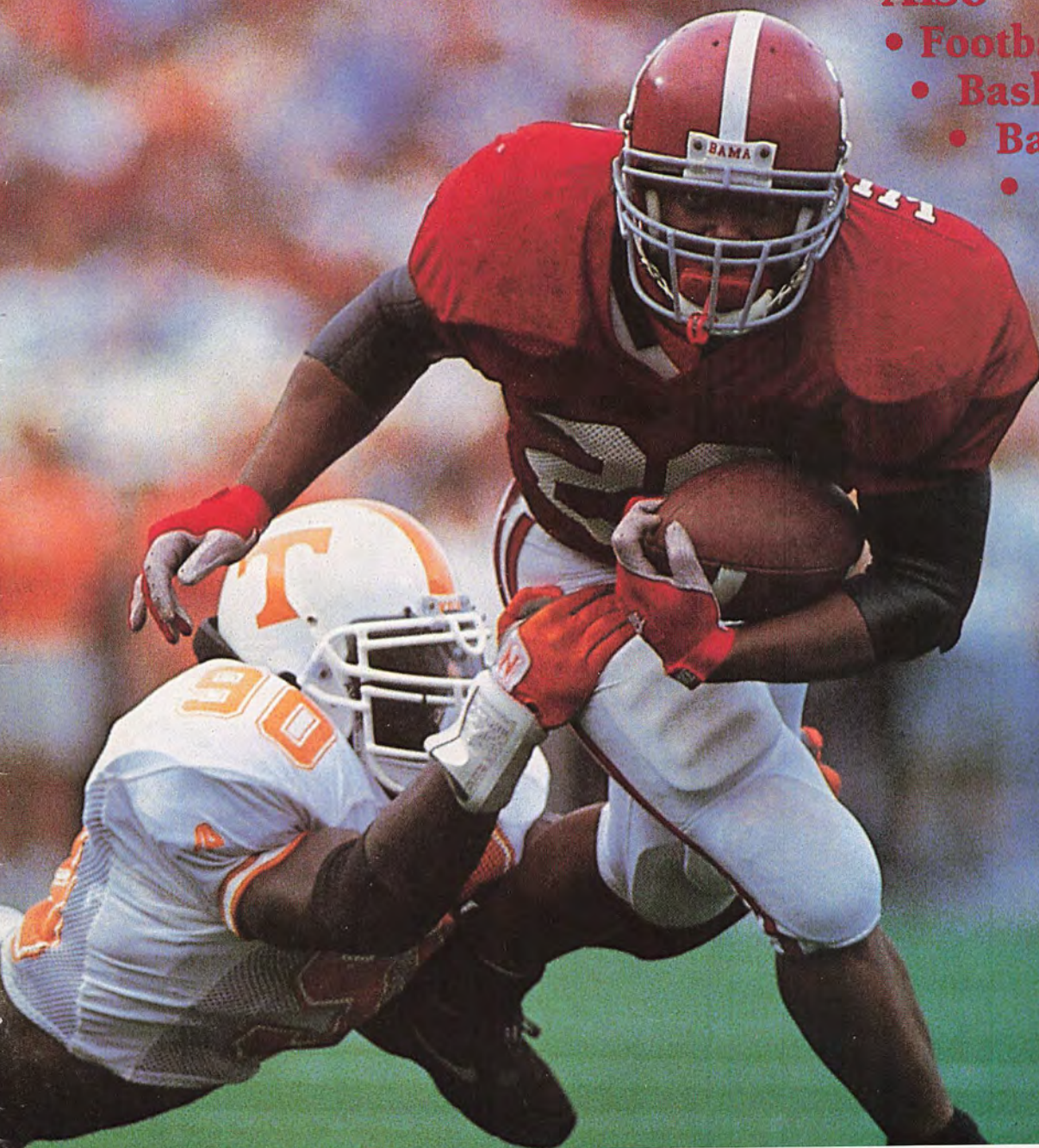
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Inside

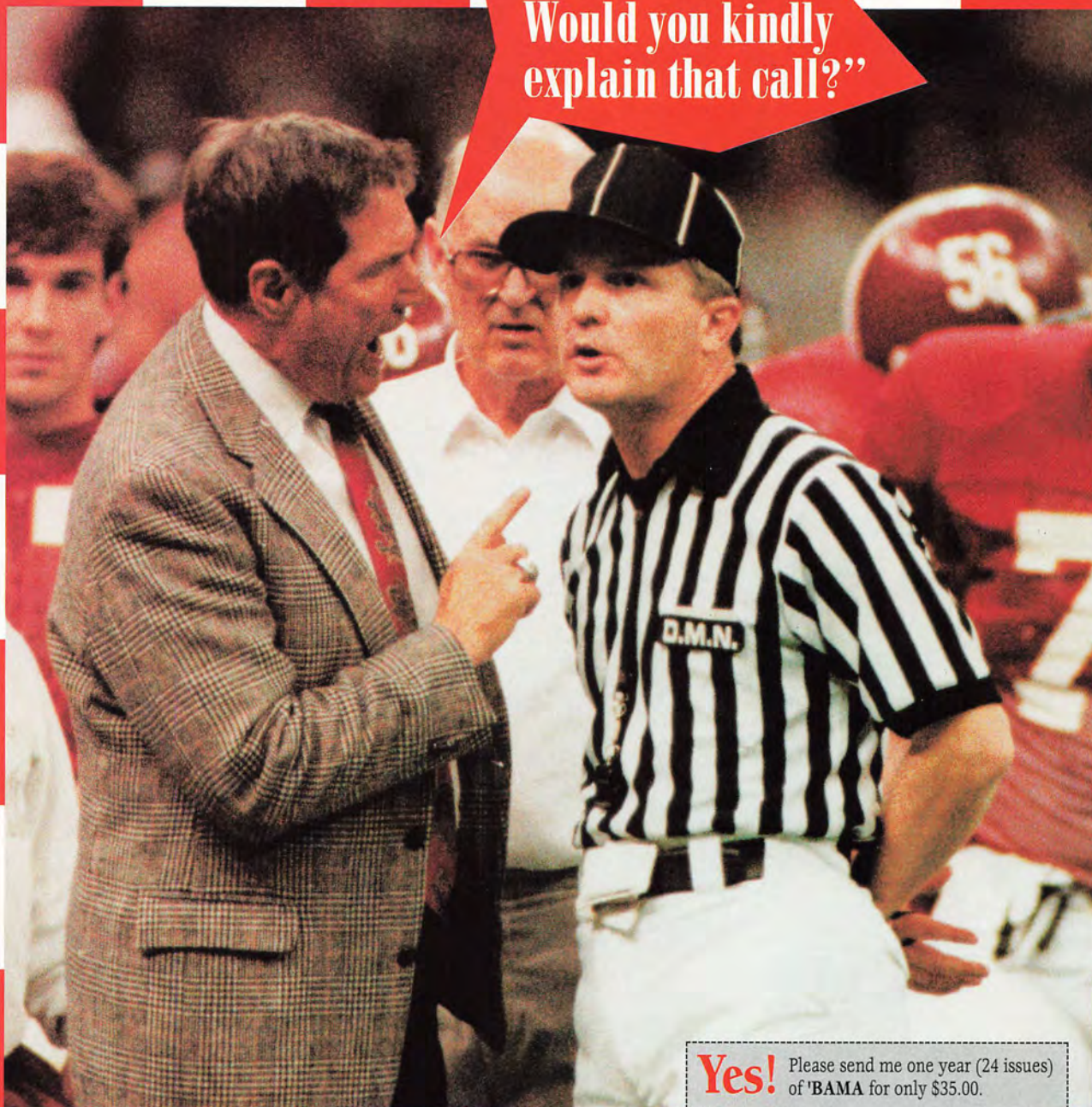
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INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

MARCH, 1994

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 3

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On the cover: Tailback Sherman Williams, a top performer for the Crimson Tide last year before and after being injured, should be a key man in Alabama's 1994 offense. He and his Tide teammates get started on that '94 season this month as spring training gets under way. See Page 12.

Barry Fikes Photo



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Alabama's football future looks very good on the strength of an outstanding recruiting year. The Crimson Tide filled a number of needs with a class of 25 newcomers, some of whom will almost certainly have a role to play as early as the 1994 season.

by Kirk McNair

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There'll Be Some Changes Made

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In what could be the most interesting spring practice since Gene Stallings has been Alabama's head football coach, the Crimson Tide football team hits the practice fields this month looking for personnel to replace departed players and, perhaps, looking at new wrinkles on both offense and defense.

by Kirk McNair



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Alabama's basketball team has had success in recent years with a handful of junior college graduates. This year's senior class includes two players, Shon Peck-Love and Walter Pitts, who grew up wanting to play for Bama, but had to put off that opportunity while gaining experience in the junior college ranks.

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Last year both the Alabama men's and women's tennis teams ranked among the nation's best. However, both squads have suffered serious losses from those teams and new Women's Head Coach Jim Tressler and Men's Head Coach John Kreis have to find replacements.

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The Alabama track and field teams move to outdoor competition and Head Coach Doug Williamson believes Bama personnel is better suited to the outdoor events. The Crimson Tide women's team has a talented senior class, while the men will depend to great extent on freshmen.

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Looking For A Little More Offense

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Bernie Bellard was one of the best hitters on Alabama's baseball team. The bad news is that Bellard was—and is—a pitcher. Lack of run-support left Bellard with a losing record, something he has not been used to in a good pitching career. He hopes as a senior to have a better year.

by John Barnes

Tide Golfer Greg Letson Is On His Way Back

30

Junior golfer Greg Letson spent nearly a month in the hospital last fall recovering from near-fatal injuries suffered in an automobile accident. In mid-February he began practicing with his Crimson Tide teammates, and he vows to return to action this spring.

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Building For The Future

by Kirk McNair

Class of 25 football newcomers is rated among best in the nation

There is never a lack of questions. What's Joe Hotshot going to do? Is he eligible? Why did we want him? What's he going to play? Where do we rank?

The recruiting game involves first identifying the prospects, then following their progress (More questions: what visits are they making, where are they "leaning," are they going to be eligible?, et al.), then figuring out the winners and losers.

There's a cottage industry of recruiting services in which self-styled experts identify and rate players and track their progress, then provide those school rankings. This year Tennessee is generally ranked first in the nation for its recruiting class, Florida State second. Alabama has generally been ranked second in the Southeastern Conference (to Tennessee) and sixth or seventh in the nation.

It is not likely Gene Stallings would swap his class for any other school's.

Alabama pretty much got what the Tide wanted with the limit of 25 new signees. As for rating Bama signees, consider this: would you rather have a player Mike Dubose or Bill Oliver or Homer Smith rated as worthy of a scholarship or a player some recruiting "expert" in Houston or Chicago or Birmingham rated as better? As soon as the player is signed, the recruiting guru is through with him. The coaches' welfare depends on their evaluations.



Michael Coleman

One very positive aspect of Alabama's recruiting class of 1994 is that it is solid academically. One signee made a 16 on the ACT and must make a 17. One signee has to have a very good final semester in his core subjects. And one signee, junior college transfer Brad Ford, will probably have to continue his schooling through the summer to earn his junior college degree. Ford, a native of Dadeville who played junior college football in California, has transferred to Shelton State in Tuscaloosa to complete his degree requirements.

Although Bama signed 25 players it wanted, Alabama didn't get every player the Tide wanted. In Alabama, the Tide lost running back Freddie Beasley of Montgomery Lee to Auburn. In Memphis, Alabama was considered the clear leader for defensive back Emmett Mitchell and defensive lineman Cletidus Hunt, but when the Tide realized it was going to be able to sign just about every player Bama wanted in the state of Alabama, those scholarship offers were withdrawn.

There's a recruiting adage that both the prospect and the prospect's mother must be recruited. In Texas, Alabama had a public commitment from wide receiver Aaron Oliver and private commitments from run-



Chris Edwards

ning back Jerod Douglas and offensive lineman Alan Faneca. Oliver decided Alabama was too far from home and signed with Texas A&M. The mothers of Douglas and Faneca ruled out Alabama for their sons.

However, the gains deserve much more attention than the so-called losses because there were far more gains than losses (and you can't really lose something you don't have, and Alabama never had any of the prospects who got away).

First and foremost, Alabama dominated its home turf. Alabama and Auburn went head-to-head for 12 prospects in Alabama and 11 of them will be wearing Crimson and White.

The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* rated the top 100 prospects in the Southeast, and of the 21 Alabama signees who prepped in the region, 17 made the list. FSU was runner-up with 13 on the newspaper's list.

There was some question about the positions Alabama recruited, notably having so many potential linebackers in the group. Stallings addressed that. "I was in pro ball long enough and I recruited long enough to know that if you draft or recruit by position, it's not long before you're broke. If you fill this room up with tackles and they're not good tackles, they



Brad Ford

aren't going to help you. You fill this room up with football players, you've got a chance to win. That's what we were trying to do: get football players."

Stallings added, "If I had to guess, I'd guess a great number of them will make a contribution this fall."

Here, in alphabetical order, is a look at the 23 high school seniors and two junior college sophomores who have signed with Alabama. The newcomers report in early August to begin workouts.

Michael Coleman, is a 5-11, 205-pound cornerback from Stratford High School in Nashville, Tennessee. He was a tailback and defensive back as a three-year starter for Coach James "Bubba" Spears on teams that went 35-5. As a senior he was named the Player of the Year in Tennessee by *USA Today* and the Lawrenceburg Quarterback Club. He was the offensive player of the year in the city and region, all-state and All-South and named to the *Orlando Sentinel's* Dixie Dozen. He was a three-year All-Metro first teamer, as a running back as a sophomore and senior, as a defensive back as a junior. He scored 191 points as a senior and 401 for his career on 48 touchdowns and 84 of 117 extra point kicks. For his career, he averaged over eight yards per



Warren Foust

carry (459 carries for 3,729 yards), 48.2 yards per kickoff return (12 for 578), 16.0 on punt returns (7 for 42), 40.1 punting (40 for 1,603 yards) and had nine pass receptions for 132 yards. As a defensive back he had 18 interceptions for 184 yards in returns and turned in 108 solo tackles and 42 assists. He is also an exceptional baseball player, a catcher and outfielder.

Chris Edwards, is a 6-2, 220-pound linebacker from Jess Lanier High School in Bessemer where he played for Coach Carrol Cox. It is a measure of Edwards' strength (he bench presses 320 and squats 460) that some reports have mentioned him as a possible down lineman and a measure of his speed (4.6 in the 40-yard dash) that others have projected him as a possible defensive back. He is also an excellent student. Edwards was an outside linebacker as a junior and had 86 tackles and 15 sacks. As a senior he moved to middle linebacker and turned in 105 solo tackles, including 12 sacks, and 45 assists. He also recovered a fumble which he returned 76 yards for a touchdown and intercepted a pass which he returned 100 yards for a touchdown. He was a Super All-State choice of *The Birmingham News* and was a 6A all-state selection.

Brad Ford, 5-10, 175, is a defensive back from Dadeville via Fresno City College in California. He was a wide re-



Calvin Hall

ceiver half of 1992 at Fresno for Coach John Volek. In the sixth game of the year he was converted to defensive back and in the first quarter of that game intercepted a pass four yards deep in the end zone and ran it back 104 yards for a touchdown. Prior to being converted he had five pass receptions for 99 yards, a 19.8 average. He finished the year with four interceptions for 136 yards. He also averaged 5.6 yards per return on 12 punt runbacks and 26.6 yards per return on 29 kickoff returns. Last season he was first team junior college All-America and was co-defensive player of the game in the Producers Dairy Bowl (the California junior college championship game). During the regular season he had 31 primary tackles and 17 assists, intercepted two passes which he returned 30 yards, broke up six passes and caused a fumble. In the bowl game he had six primary tackles, one assist, broke up two passes and intercepted a pass which he returned 36 yards. As a prep wide receiver and defensive back for Coach Philip Baker at Dadeville, Ford was overlooked by recruiters because of his size, only about 150 pounds. He is the second Fresno transfer to Alabama. In the early 1970s Bama got two-year starting full-back Steve Bisceglia.

Warren Foust is a 6-3, 205-pound quarterback from Midwest City (Oklahoma) High School. Although he was the starting quarterback for Coach



Steven Harris

Dennis Huggins as a senior, he was a starting outside linebacker and strong safety as a junior. The straight-A, National Honor Society student was named the state's Scholar-Athlete of the Year by *The Oklahoman* (and received his award at the same banquet in Oklahoma City where Bama's Antonio Langham was presented the Jim Thorpe Award as the nation's top college defensive back). He was all-state and named an Oklahoma Blue-Chipper. As a senior he completed over 60 percent of his passes (89 of 148) for 1,208 yards and five touchdowns. He also rushed 149 times for 1,061 yards (7.1 yards per carry) and nine touchdowns. He also holds school records in track (6-6 high jump) and basketball (42 points in one game).

Calvin Hall, 6-3, 195, is a wide receiver from Gallatin (Tennessee) High School, where he was a three-year starter for Coach Calvin Short and played on teams that won one state championship and finished second for another. Although he was all-state and listed among the top dozen prospects in Tennessee as a senior, an injury that forced him to miss several games cut down on his production. Indeed, every account of Hall said that he had a better junior year than senior season. However, the senior year wasn't bad with 20 receptions for 345 yards and two touchdowns. And on defense, he was an end who turned in 37 tackles and two in-



Matt Harrison

terceptions. For his career he had 79 pass receptions for 1,659 yards and 15 touchdowns. He also had 29 punt returns for 234 yards, three interceptions which he returned 35 yards, eight rushes for 65 yards, and 110 tackles, including 10 sacks. He is also a four-year letterman in basketball and a three-year letterman in baseball. His brother, Doug, plays baseball in junior college. Hall is an A student.

Steven Harris, 6-3, 220, was a quarterback and strong safety for Coach Rickey Johnson at Town Creek Hazlewood, but he is generally listed as a linebacker by recruiting services. He is also listed as one of the top performers in the country and ranked as either the number one or number two prospect on virtually every list in Alabama. Although he missed five games his senior season after under going arthroscopic knee surgery, he turned in 110 tackles (including five sacks), four fumble recoveries, and had three interceptions playing defense and accounted for over 800 all-purpose yards. He was a four-year starter who played on three state championship teams, one runner-up team. Harris was a unanimous all-state selection and was also all-state as a junior. He is also a starting forward on the basketball team and averaged 12 points per game as a junior.

Matt Harrison is a 6-5, 260-pound center who starred for Coach Philip Baker at Dadeville. He also played defensive tackle



Chris Hood

and was his team's snapper. The four-year starter was selected to virtually every all-state and All-South team, including *The Birmingham News* Super Seniors list. He has been nominated for the Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Game. He graded over 85 per cent for the year. Defensively, he turned in over 75 tackles, including five sacks, caused three fumbles, broke up three passes, and made an interception. Both his parents are Auburn graduates. He has two brothers who have played college football, Chad at Princeton and Brett at Mississippi State. He has also played basketball and is a shot put man on the track team. Harrison has a 4.1 grade point average and is a nominee for a Bryant-Jordan Student-Athlete Scholarship.

Chris Hood, 6-3, 240, is a four-year starter and four-year all-state performer as a linebacker for Town Creek Hazlewood. He was Player of the Year in 2A as a senior and a unanimous all-state selection. He was a member of *The Birmingham News* Super Seniors all-state team. He led his team in tackles as both a junior and senior, getting 99 tackles, including 10 sacks in 1992, and over 130 last season. Hood, who has overcome a career-threatening injury—the loss of an eye—has also played as a lineman on both offense and defense. He is also a top basketball player, averaging 15 points per game from his center position.

Eddie Hunter, a 6-3, 210-pound



Eric Kerley

linebacker at Mobile LeFlore, had 76 tackles and 16 sacks as a senior, and those are also career statistics since it was his first year to play high school football. He was a basketball player whose coach, Stanley Conner, talked him into playing football. He was in Alabama's football camp last summer. He has a 3.5 grade point average. He is a three-year starter in basketball who is averaging over 15 points and 9 rebounds per game this year. He was named to the All-Area Tournament team both as a sophomore and junior in basketball.

Eric Kerley, a 6-2, 280-pound defensive tackle from Birmingham Berry, was a three-year starter and an all-state performer for Coach Bob Finley. He was considered the top defensive lineman in the state and was named to the Super Seniors all-state team and was also all-state as a junior. He was the final prospect to commit to Alabama, choosing the Crimson Tide on February 1, the day before signing day. As a senior Kerley turned in 108 tackles, including 10 stops behind the line, three quarterback sacks, 21 quarterback pressures, and one fumble recovery, despite missing three games with a knee injury. He has good speed and strength and played tight end on goalline situations. He also throws the discus in track.

Montoya Madden, 5-9, 205, was a running back for Coach Rickey Johnson at powerful Town Creek Hazlewood. He had over 4,000 career rushing yards,



Montoya Madden

despite being injured part of his senior season. He had over 1,200 yards and 21 touchdowns as a senior. As a junior he rushed for over 2,000 yards. He was all-state both as a junior and senior and was a four-year starter. Although he is not tall, he is considered a "big" back and could be used at fullback by Bama.

Franz Odom, a 6-1, 240-pound linebacker for Coach Jerry Gartman at Mary Montgomery of Semmes, is the first cousin of current Alabama freshman linebacker Ralph Staten from the same high school. If there is a surprise in the recruiting class, it is Odom, who was discovered by Tide coaches during their evaluation of Staten a year earlier. However, Odom was not discovered by the recruiting services and so was not well known. As a senior he turned in 60 tackles, including five sacks, three fumble recovers and two passes broken up. Odom also saw occasional duty at fullback, picking up 220 yards on 25 carries.

Matt Parker was a top high school football prospect two years ago, good enough to sign with Oklahoma State. However, when the 6-4, 260-pound defensive tackle from Lawton, Oklahoma, became disenchanted with the Cowboys, he decided to continue his football career at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M, a junior college in Miami, Oklahoma. He earned junior college All-America as he led the Golden Norsemen of Coach Mike Loyd in tackles.



Franz Odom

Parker had 49 primary tackles and 52 assists for the 10-1 Northeastern team that was ranked third in the nation. He turned in nine sacks and caused a fumble. Parker is used to winning. His high school, Lawton Eisenhower, was named the nation's number one team by *USA Today* his senior season in 1991. He earned Oklahoma Super Team honors as he recorded 100 tackles, including 13 sacks.

John David Phillips, 6-4, 195, is another recent Alabama quarterback signee who has limited experience at that position. Nevertheless, after playing primarily at defensive back prior to his senior year for Coach Rodney Bivens at Anniston High School, Phillips blossomed into an outstanding quarterback. He did have a few quarterback starts as a junior, but really showed quarterback promise in Anniston's final game of 1992, nearly rallying his team to victory against powerful Montgomery Lee on the road. He came in late in the first half and finished the game with 16 of 28 completions for 173 yards and a touchdown with no interceptions and also rushed for 20 yards. As a senior he completed 53 of 115 passes for 877 yards and eight touchdowns. In addition to quarterback and cornerback, he has seen action as a linebacker, tight end and punter and snapped on field goals and extra points. He is also a fine baseball player (pitcher and outfielder) and a forward on the basketball team.



Matt Parker

Dennis Riddle is a 6-0, 195-pound running back for Tuscaloosa Central, where he was a two-time all-state selection for Coach Buzz Busby. As a senior he rushed 216 times for 1,301 yards and 19 touchdowns. He also had 12 receptions for 141 yards and one score. He also returned punts (eight for 80 yards with one touchdown) and kickoffs (11 for 217 yards) as part of his 1,769 all-purpose yards. He was also named to the Super Seniors all-state team. He rushed for over 1,600 yards and scored 17 touchdowns as a junior. He was also a starter at fullback in Central's former offense, the Notre Dame Box, and rushed for over 1,000 yards and scored 12 touchdowns. Riddle also saw some action at linebacker. He also plays basketball.

Dwayne Rudd, 6-4, 230, was named the top prospect in the state of Mississippi this year by the *Jackson Clarion-Ledger* for his linebacker play at South



John David Phillips

Panola in Batesville. South Panola, under Coach Willis Wright, was an easy winner of the state championship with a 15-0 record. Rudd was named to numerous prep All-America teams. As a senior he turned in 121 tackles, including 12 tackles for losses and seven quarterback sacks. He caused five fumbles and recovered two, one of which he returned 44 yards for a touchdown. He had one pass interception and broke up two passes. In his career he had five interceptions, returning one 87 yards for a touchdown. His brother, Darryl, is the starting free safety at Delta State.

Rod Rutledge is a 6-5, 235-pound tight end from Erwin High School in Birmingham, where he was an all-state performer for Coach Hal Riddle. Some ratings listed the Super Seniors performer as high as the number two prospect in Alabama and many consider him the most talented player inked by the Tide. He was a



Dennis Riddle

tight end on offense and outside linebacker on defense and is considered a possibility as a defensive end. He was a four-year starter. As a senior he had 19 receptions for 331 yards (over 17 yards per catch) and four touchdowns. As a junior he had 20 receptions for 337 yards and four scores. He also had a touchdown on a kickoff return. He is his school's basketball center and a hurdler, long jumper and triple jumper for the track team.

Ed Scissum is a 6-1, 210-pound running back from Etowah High School in Attalla. He was an all-state performer as a senior as he accounted for over 2,000 yards of total offense, including over 1,600 yards rushing. He rushed for 21 touchdowns. He also had 375 yards and three touchdowns receiving for Coach Raymond Farmer. As a junior he rushed for 827 yards, including a dramatic 91-yard touchdown run in the state playoffs. He also



Dwayne Rudd

played linebacker in his prep career. He was a three-year starter and his former teammates included current Tiders Toderick Malone and Freddie Kitchens. Scissum also played basketball. His cousin, Tyrone Nix, was an all-star linebacker at Southern Miss.

Chris Sign, 6-2, 252, is a center from Lamar High School in Arlington, Texas, where he was a two-year starter and was 5A all-state as a senior for Coach Eddy Peach. He was both a guard and center on offense and also played tackle on defense. He was also All-Southwest. He had 136 knockdown blocks in his senior season. He is also a two-year letterman in track as a shot putter. His older brothers both played college football, Bobby at Pittsburgh and Baylor (1984-89) and Matt at Rice (1989 and still playing). Sign was the first high school senior to commit to Alabama.

Tito Smith is a 6-3, 205-pound linebacker who played



Rod Rutledge



Ed Scissum



Chris Sign



Tito Smith



Sage Spree

for former Tider Robert Higginbotham at Shades Valley High School in Birmingham. He was a three-year starter as an inside linebacker and as a tight end on offense. He was Super Seniors all-state and was named Birmingham player of the year by both the Birmingham Touchdown Club and the Birmingham Monday Morning Quarterback Club. He turned in 150 tackles, caused three fumbles and had an interception as a senior. Included in those totals was a 24-tackle performance against Berry. He had over 400 tackles in his career.



Josh Swords

He is also a forward on the basketball team. Smith selected Alabama even though he has a sister at Auburn.

Sage Spree, 6-5, 290, is an offensive tackle from Warrior Academy in Eutaw, where he has been a starter since he was in the eighth grade. Although he is projected as an offensive lineman, he also played defensive tackle and even fullback on occasion for Coach Lee Holladay. He graded over 92 per cent for the year, one reason he was one of the most highly-recruited players in Alabama history. He made recruiting trips to



Granison Wagstaff

Notre Dame, Nebraska and Stanford and was also recruited by Florida State before selecting Bama. *Football News* named him one of the nation's top ten offensive line prospects. He owns several national power lifting records. As a defensive lineman he had 53 solo tackles, 28 assists, six sacks, and three fumble recoveries. As a fullback he rushed for 157 yards and two touchdowns. He also plays basketball and baseball.

Josh Swords is a 6-3, 275-pound offensive guard who played for Coach Carlton Flatt at powerful Brentwood Academy in Brentwood, Tennessee. He was the Gatorade Circle of Champions Player of the Year in Tennessee, a *Parade* All-America and ranked as the state's number three prospect by the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*. One recruiting service rated him the nation's number seven guard. He was a three-year starters whose teams had a combined 403 record, all three losses coming in the state championship games. He graded over 90 per cent as a blocker. He is also a shot put man for the track team and school champion in weight-lifting.

Deshea Townsend, 5-10, 170, Batesville, Mississippi, South Panola, quarterbacked his team to a 15-0 record and the state championship. He was a wide receiver, his projected college position, as a sophomore, but played quarterback the past two years. As a senior he accounted for over 1,800 yards total of-



Owen Winston

fense and 18 touchdowns, rushing for 10 and passing for eight. He played for Coach Willis Wright. He also played defensive back. He was ranked the state of Mississippi's fifth top prospect by the *Jackson Clarion-Ledger*. Townsend is a guard on the basketball team.

Granison Wagstaff is a 6-3, 245-pounder from Enterprise, where he was an inside linebacker for Coach Bill Bacon. He could project as a defensive end. Wagstaff was a three-year starter and was all-state as a senior. Last season he turned in 115 tackles, including seven sacks and 12 tackles for losses, and caused four fumbles, recovered three.

Owen Winston, 6-0, 175, Montgomery Carver, was a quarterback and defensive back and a three-year starter. He is also a 100-meter track sprinter. He was second team all-metro both his junior and senior seasons as a quarterback and all-area as a senior as a defensive back. He passed for 1300 yards and 12 touchdowns and rushed for over 300 yards as a senior before moving to the secondary late in the year. For his career he passed for over 2,200 yards and 17 touchdowns. He started four games as a defensive back and had four interceptions, broke up nine passes, and was his team's second-leading tackler with 62. Against Robert E. Lee he passed for 156 yards and two touchdowns and rushed for 50 yards. He was coached by Al Pickett.



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1994 Football Depth Chart By Class

Here is a depth chart by class of those who are scheduled to be on Alabama's football roster in 1994. It is important to remember that this is not a true depth chart. It should also be noted that spring training may result in some position changes and that the positions of incoming freshmen are in some cases merely educated guesses.

Offense

Position	Senior	Junior	Sophomore	Redshirt Freshman	Incoming Freshman
Split End	C. Brown Colburn	Malone Key		Abernathy	Hall
Left Tackle	Harville Lawson	McNeal Segrest			Spree
Left Guard		Belser	White	Friend	Swords
Center	Stephenson	Barnett	Causey C. Smith		Harrison Sign
Right Guard	Folks		DiMario Pennington		
Right Tackle		Thornton		Holliday Jordan	
Tight End		Tony Johnson	Patrick Hape Lewis		Rutledge
Quarterback	Barker	Burgdorf	Kitchens	Tucker Goss	Foust Phillips
Fullback	Lynch	Burroughs Niblett	T. Turner Steger		Scissum
Halfback	Williams			Alexander Vallery	Riddle Madden
Flanker			West		Townsend
Placekicker	Wethington	Proctor	Watts		

Defense

Position	Senior	Junior	Sophomore	Redshirt Freshman	Incoming Freshman
Left End		Bodden		Walker	Wagstaff
Left Tackle		S. Brown Burton		Ray	Kerley
Right Tackle	E. Brown	Parker	Powell	Thompson	Odom
Right End	Jeffries		Moore		
Strong Linebacker	*Royal Foshee	Fell	Buckner Tanks		Edwards
Middle Linebacker	Rogers	Walters Torrence	Floyd Robbins		Hood Rudd
Weakside Linebacker	*W. Brown Cole	Knowlton	Blackburn Staten	Pickett Ferguson	T. Smith Hunter
Left Cornerback	Tommy Johnson Conn	Ford High			
Right Cornerback	Woody	Gibson	Samuel	Cunningham	Coleman
Strong Safety	Shade Davis			Short	Harris
Safety	Gaston	Ausmus	Canale		Winston
Punter	Diehl		Stockton		

*There has been no announcement whether linebackers André Royal and Will Brown will be on the team this spring or fall.

There'll Be Some Changes Made

by Kirk McNair

Alabama has to find replacements

There are going to be some new things going on in Alabama football practice this spring, but not as many as there might have been and probably not as many as some believe.

Certainly there are going to be a lot of new faces in various positions. Alabama's losses from last season are substantial, particularly offensively.

There's a new quarterbacks coach, at least new to this staff. Homer Smith, who had great success in his previous stint at Alabama as quarterbacks coach and offensive coordinator under Bill Curry, is back in the same position under Gene Stallings. Smith will find Stallings to be a different type head coach than Curry. Curry turned his team over to his coordinators. Stallings is, as he puts it, a hands-on coach.

Don't look for Stallings to move into a tower and watch Smith run the offense and Bill Oliver, now with the title of defensive coordinator to go along with his job as assistant coach in charge of the secondary, run the defense.

While Smith—who replaced Mal Moore, promoted to associate athletics director—is not the only change in the staff, it is the most substantive one. Ellis Johnson, who coached Alabama's outside linebackers, left the Tide to take a similar position at Clemson. His place as an on-the-field coach has been assumed by Randy Ross, but Ross is not necessarily expected to handle the duties Johnson did. Ross has been Alabama's recruiting coordinator. This year the NCAA eliminated that position, mandating that recruiting be coordinated by either the head coach or an assistant coach. Ross' primary job will continue to be recruiting coordinator.

It appeared there was going to be a big hole to fill in the Crimson Tide staff. Much-heralded Mike Dubose, the defensive line coach, accepted a job with the Tampa Bay Bucs of the National Football League (from whence he had returned to Bama in 1990), but reconsidered after one day in Tampa, and just before his position on the Alabama staff had been filled.

Spring is a time for experimentation, and one of the issues that could be determined during spring training is what basic defense Alabama plans to use. Last year the Tide started the season in a 3-4 (two defensive ends, a nose tackle, two outside linebackers and two inside linebackers), the basic defense at Bama for a couple of decades. However, midway through the year the Tide became a multiple defense, sometimes in the 3-4, sometimes in the 4-3 (four defensive linemen and three linebackers).

It is important to remember that Alabama's defense includes about a dozen variations regardless of the basic scheme, owing to the Tide's innovative mixtures of linemen, linebackers and defensive backs. However, conventional wisdom has it that the 3-4 is better suited against a run-oriented—and particularly option—offense, the 4-3 more effective against a drop-back passing offense.

Best guess is that Alabama is headed for a 4-3. Among other things, that means that only three coaches—one for the linemen, one for the linebackers and one for the secondary—are essential. (Okay, four if you count Stallings.)

Spring training is scheduled to begin March 10 and end with the A-Day Game in Bryant-Denny Stadium April 16. No practices are scheduled March

25 through April 4 as The University has its spring break. NCAA rules allow 15 practice sessions, no more than 10 of them full-contact sessions.

Although there are some good players to be replaced on defense, there are also some good ones returning. Pessimists can say that Alabama lost six starters on defense, while optimists could say Alabama has 10 or 11 starters returning. That's because the same men didn't always start, owing to injury, performance, suspensions, and the basic scheme.

However, almost everyone would agree that Alabama has big shoes to fill in replacing defensive end Jeremy Nunley, nose tackle James Gregory, outside linebacker Lemanski Hall and cornerback Antonio Langham. All earned all-star honors. Chris Donnelly at safety and Mario Morris at inside linebacker also had some starting assignments.

Regardless of the basic defensive alignment, Alabama should be able to mix and match its down linemen and linebackers to have a good idea of the starting front seven going into next fall.

In the past, Alabama has had a few men in the defensive front capable of playing either end or tackle, and that is likely to continue to be the case. Elverett Brown, Shannon Brown and Ozell Powell are at home at either position. Kendrick Burton is a tackle, whether Alabama is in a three-man or a four-man front, just as Dameian Jeffries, Kelvin Moore and Vann Bodden are always defensive ends. Joining that group this spring will be redshirt freshman end Edgar Walker and redshirt freshman tackles Steve Thompson and walk-on Michael Ray.

Linebackers generally have to think "Run" first, but some have to think "Pass" more quickly than others and some have to think "Blitz" first. Responsibilities for each linebacker are a little different whether there are three of them or four of them, but in a three-

man front the outside linebackers are usually pass coverage and rush men, the inside linebackers run-stoppers.

It gets a little more complicated with just three, and there are exceptions. But a basic primer would say that the inside linebacker is most concerned with the running game, the linebacker on the opponent's strong side (the side with the tight end in most cases) is mostly run conscious, and the linebacker on the opponent's weak side is more likely to have pass coverage and pass rush responsibilities. For that reason, the weak side outside linebacker is most dependent on speed.

In recent years, Alabama came up with an innovative type of weakside outside linebacker, the big defensive back changed to a small, fast linebacker. The experiment was notably successful with former defensive back Lemanski Hall becoming an all-star outside linebacker.

Michael Rogers is almost a sure bet at middle linebacker. Those who would be candidates to either back him up or play strong-side linebacker are John Walters, Jeff Torrence, Lamont Floyd and Fernando Davis. Those most likely to be at one of the two outside linebacker spots are Tyrell Buckner, Darrell Blackburn, John Tanks, Paul Pickett and Ralph Staten, if he is not moved to the secondary. (Torrence, who suffered a knee injury in the Gator Bowl, will not participate in spring training.)

The jury is still out on two men who started a combined nine games at outside linebacker for Alabama last year. Will Brown, who started seven games, and André Royal, who started two, were both suspended after Alabama's 11th game and did not play in either the Southeastern Conference Championship Game or the Gator Bowl. While neither has been officially reinstated to the team and neither is listed on a tentative spring training roster issued by the athletics department, both have been in Alabama's off season program of



Michael Rogers (52) has been a mainstay at middle linebacker for the past two years, usually in a 3-4 defensive scheme. Alabama may switch to a 4-3 alignment full-time this year, which means more responsibility for the linebackers. Barry Fikes Photo

weight-lifting and running. If they return—and return to past form—they are both top candidates for linebacker spots.

The secondary looks a little more depth-poor than the front, a bad situation in that a porous secondary is hazardous to a football team's health. Four men who started games do return, led by strong safety Sam Shade and cornerback Tommy Johnson. Willie Gaston was a solid safety last year, while Cedric Samuel is a promising player at cornerback, where he started in the Gator Bowl.

Depth at strong safety includes Eric Turner and redshirt freshman Andre Short, and possibly Staten from linebacker. Behind Gaston at safety is Blair Canale, if Canale is not moved to wide receiver. Behind him is Michael Ausmus, a walk-on who lettered last year, but lettered primarily for his work on special teams.

The situation at cornerback is more bleak. There are actually

no experienced scholarship players on the depth chart at cornerback. Walk-ons Mickey Conn and Tracy High have seen a very little playing time. And a third cornerback has frequently been a key player in Bama's special defensive alignments. Help could come from the offense. Running back Dameian Vallery, redshirted last year, was a defensive back through much of his high school career. More likely, Ron Gibson, who transferred from Auburn and sat out last year, could end up in the secondary. Gibson spent last fall as a scout team running back, but he was a defensive back at Auburn.

The offensive line had been expected to be a strength of the 1993 Crimson Tide. Not many would make a post-season assessment that gave high marks to the up-front men. So is it good news or bad news that the five who started tackle-to-tackle in the

last half of the season have all graduated?

Although the importance of skill position players cannot be overlooked, the key to a successful offense is frequently the offensive line, in part because there are fewer men with the size, strength and intellect to play up front. And since every play begins with the snap of the ball, the center is considered the most important offensive line position. The graduation of All-SEC center Tobie Sheils has to rank among Bama's biggest losses. Alabama returns exactly one man who has snapped a ball in a game, John Causey. And Causey was really considered about third team for most of the year, since the graduated Dennis Deason (who ended up a starting guard) was a backup center as well as guard for much of the year.

Nevertheless, Causey performed well in his limited opportunities and will go into spring training as number one center unless the Tide moves

Jon Stevenson into that spot. Stevenson, a starter at right tackle as a freshman, and a starter at right guard the past two years (before having his season ended by a knee injury midway through 1993), could be at either right guard or center this spring. In any event, there are no other scholarship centers on the team, unless LaRon White, a former nose tackle who moved to offensive guard late last year, is considered a center. Tim Barnett has worked at center, tackle, tight end and nose tackle, and will probably be back at center this spring.

Although Stevenson has not yet been cleared for contact, he should be able to practice this spring. If he's at guard, he'll be backed by Pete DiMario, Jeremy Pennington and Napoleon Folks. At left guard, where John Clay has graduated, Maurice Belser is the top returning letterman, but redshirt freshman Will Friend is considered a top prospect.

Matt Hammond started four consecutive years at left tackle. The man most likely to replace him this season had about as many snaps at tackle last season as either of the starters, Hammond on the left side and Roosevelt Patterson on the right. Joey Harville played both spots in 1993, but is expected to handle the difficult left tackle position this year. Kareem McNeal and Rory Segrest have limited experience at the position. A pair of redshirted freshmen are expected to compete for the starting job at right tackle. Joel Holliday was one of the top newcomers last year from Day One. Chris Jordan didn't have a fast start in his freshman season of scout team work last season, but by the time Alabama was in its bowl practices, Jordan was a standout. Bryan Thornton, who moved from defense to offense last year, is also a candidate at tackle.

The five offensive linemen are among eight offensive starters who are not returning, and that doesn't include quarterback Jay Barker being something of a question mark.

The biggest losses beyond the offensive line are wide receiver spots. It may be that the most apparent difference in the offense of the past three seasons and the offense of 1994 will be how the flanker is used. However, that speaks less of a change in philosophy than it does of a change in league; that is, David Palmer switching from the SEC to the NFL. Palmer's loss at flanker may mean fewer of the so-called trick plays. The Tide also lost starting split end Kevin Lee. However, the roster shows more split end types than flanker types. Marcell West is listed as a flanker, but Chad Key, Toderick Malone Curtis Brown (who is coming back after having missed 1993 with a knee injury), and walk-on Roman Colburn are all split ends.

While Barker, who is recovering from knee surgery, may not be able to participate in contact work this spring, the quarterback's job is at least as much cerebral as it is physical. Even if Barker can't participate in the action, he'll be paying close attention to Smith. Brian Burgdorf has reason to expect to come

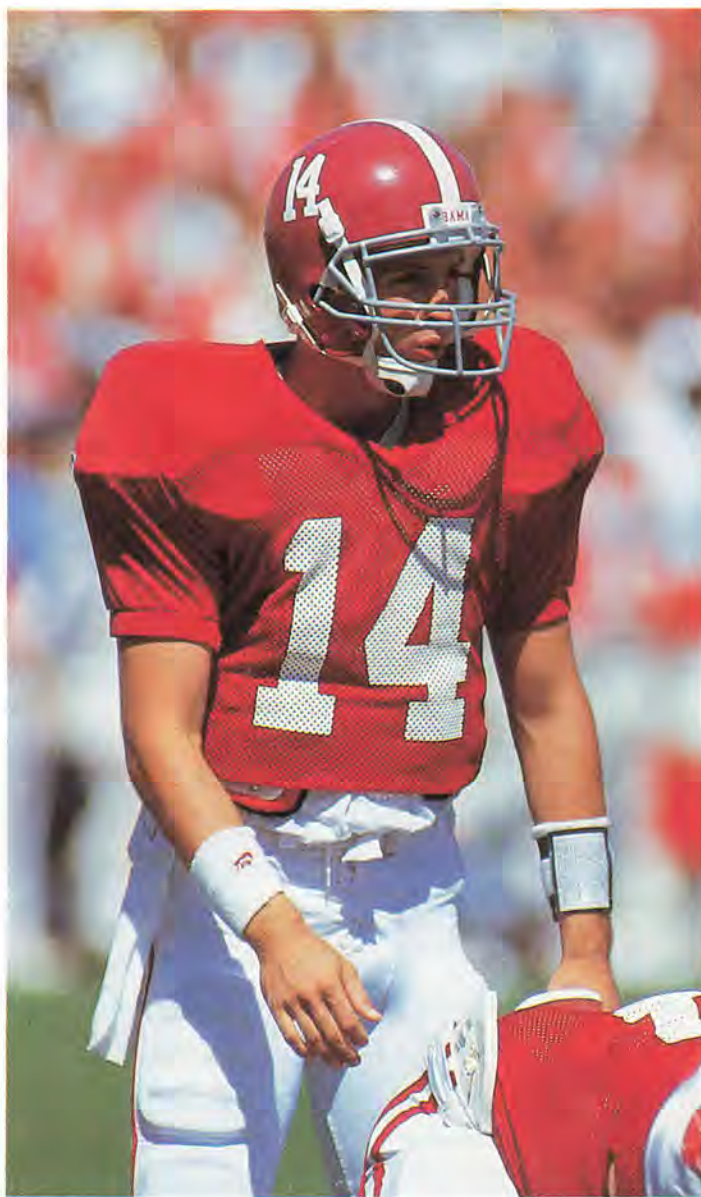
into spring training as the number one quarterback after his Most Valuable Player performance, leading Bama to a win over North Carolina in the Gator Bowl. Freddie Kitchens didn't get much playing time as a freshman in 1993, but he got enough to show a strong arm. Lance Tucker, who was often the most efficient Tide quarterback in practices last year when he was being redshirted, also gets a chance under a new coach.

Although Alabama lost a starter and four-year letterman in Chris Anderson, the tailback position appears to be among the most solid on offense. Sherman Williams began last year with five consecutive games of rushing for 100 or more yards and ended it with a near-100-yard game in the Gator Bowl. In between, he was not effective, owing to a shoulder injury. One of the pleasant surprises of last year was the play of freshman Brian Steger at tailback. Steger could be moved to fullback this spring, but that won't leave Alabama without a big tailback. Curtis Alexander and Vallery were both impressive during their redshirt seasons, particularly during bowl preparation. It seems unlikely that Vallery and Gibson would go to defense and Steger to fullback this spring.

Based on Smith's previous tenure at Alabama, two positions where players can expect their roles to be changed and, in some ways, enhanced, are fullback and tight end. And Bama returns both the starter and top backup at both spots.

Tony Johnson, who started most of the year at tight end, is considered an outstanding pass catcher (and runner after he catches it) and a mediocre blocker. Although he will be expected to improve his blocking, the tight end will probably be more involved in pass routes. Patrick Hape had a reasonably good freshman year at tight end, but was a suspect pass receiver. However, his background as an all-around excellent athlete should mean that he will be a good pass catcher, and he's a better-than-average blocker. Both Barnett and Thornton have a little background at tight end.

Although Tarrant Lynch is the



Brian Burgdorf should be the number one quarterback for Alabama when spring training begins, based on his performance in the Gator Bowl.

Barry Fikes Photo

returning starter at fullback, he's not much ahead of Taurus Turner, who played as a true freshman last year. Lynch will have to successfully battle the bulge to be quick enough to be the type fullback utilized as a pass receiver and runner as well as a blocker. Turner impressed Tide coaches with his toughness in his first year and he has the speed and skills for the expanded role the fullback is expected to have in the offense.

The best news about the kicking game is that the kickers return. Both

placekicker Michael Proctor and punter Bryne Diehl have all-star potential, and William Watts returns to kick off.

The bad news is that a lot of other key personnel in the kicking game—notably return man Palmer—are gone. The Tide will have to have a new snapper (Chester Lewis was the backup last year, and Stevenson has also worked on the deep snaps). Diehl was the holder last year.

Traditionally, Alabama has not spent a great deal of the limited practice time during spring training to work on the overall kicking game.

1994 Football Spring Training Roster

Name, Pos.	Cl.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Exp.	Hometown	Name, Pos.	Cl.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Exp.	Hometown
Thad Abernathy, SE	Fr.	6-0	160	RS	Enterprise	Freddie Kitchens, QB	So.	6-3	200	1L	Attalla
Curtis Alexander, RB	Fr.	6-1	208	RS	Memphis	Will Knowlton, OLB	Jr.	6-3	217	Sq	Fayette
Michael Ausmus, S	Jr.	5-9	178	2L	Mobile	Kirk Lawson, OT	Sr.	6-5	270	Sq	Florence
Jay Barker, QB	Sr.	6-3	210	3L	Trussville	Chester Lewis, SN-TE	So.	6-4	236	Sq	Tuscaloosa
Tim Barnett, C-TE	Jr.	6-5	287	Sq	Bear Creek	Tarrant Lynch, FB	Sr.	6-1	224	3L	Town Creek
Maurice Belser, OG	Jr.	6-2	289	2L	Cordova	Toderick Malone, SE	Jr.	6-0	185	1L	Attalla
Darrell Blackburn, OLB	So.	6-4	224	1L	Huntsville	Kareem McNeal, OT	Jr.	6-5	287	2L	Tuskegee
Vann Bodden, DE	Jr.	6-4	255	1L	Moss Point, Miss.	Kelvin Moore, DT	So.	6-3	250	1L	Daphne
Curt Brown, SE	Jr.	6-3	189	2L	John's Island, S.C.	Josh Niblett, FB-TE	Jr.	6-2	208	1L	Demopolis
Elverett Brown, DE	Sr.	6-5	266	3L	Montgomery	Jeremy Pennington, OG	So.	6-3	270	1L	Vernon
Shannon Brown, DT	Jr.	6-5	263	2L	Millbrook	Paul Pickett, OLB	Fr.	6-3	230	RS	LaGrange, Ga.
*Will Brown, OLB	Sr.	6-1	220	2L	Syracuse, N.Y.	Ozell Powell, DE	So.	6-5	275	1L	Greenville
Tyrell Buckner, ILB	So.	6-1	235	1L	Denison, Texas	Michael Proctor, PK	Jr.	5-11	183	2L	Pelham
Brian Burgdorf, QB	Jr.	6-2	190	2L	Cedartown, Ga.	Michael Ray, DT	Fr.	6-5	305	RS	Boaz
Anthony Burroughs, FB	Jr.	5-11	208	Sq	Rogersville	Shelby Robbins, ILB	So.	5-11	230	Tr	Mobile
Kendrick Burton, DT	Jr.	6-6	290	1L	Hartselle	Michael Rogers, ILB	Sr.	6-1	232	3L	Luverne
Blair Canale, S-SE	So.	6-3	199	1L	Memphis	*André Royal, OLB	Sr.	6-2	220	1L	Northport
John Causey, C	So.	6-1	260	1L	Hayneville	Cedric Samuel, CB	So.	5-9	183	1L	Demopolis
Roman Colburn, SE	Sr.	6-0	180	2L	Fort Payne	Rory Segrest, OT	Jr.	6-5	274	Sq	Waycross, Ga.
Jason Cole, OLB	Sr.	6-2	209	Sq	Albertville	Sam Shade, SS	Sr.	6-1	190	3L	Birmingham
Mickey Conn, CB	Sr.	5-10	175	2L	Snellville, Ga.	Andre Short, SS	Fr.	5-11	205	RS	LaGrange, Ga.
Derek Cunningham, CB	Fr.	5-8	150	RS	Pelham	Darrell Smith, C	So.	6-2	265	Sq	Munford
Danny Davis, SS	Sr.	6-2	213	2L	Memphis	Ralph Staten, OLB	So.	6-3	200	1L	Semmes
Fernando Davis, ILB	So.	6-3	225	1L	Aberdeen, Miss.	Brian Steger, FB	So.	6-3	210	1L	New Market
Bryne Diehl, P	Sr.	6-3	215	2L	Oakman	Jon Stevenson, OG-C	Sr.	6-3	280	3L	Memphis
Pete DiMario, OG-OT	So.	6-5	270	1L	Tuscaloosa	Hayden Stockton, P	So.	6-0	193	RS	Double Springs
Howie Fell, ILB	Jr.	6-1	225	Sq	Birmingham	John Tanks, OLB	So.	6-4	226	1L	Butler
Lee Ferguson, OLB	Fr.	6-1	192	RS	Albertville	Steve Thompson, DT	Fr.	6-5	270	RS	Birmingham
Lamont Floyd, ILB	So.	6-2	240	1L	Orange Park, Fla.	Bryan Thornton, OT	Jr.	6-7	280	2L	Mobile
Napoleon Folks, OG	Sr.	6-3	290	Sq	Montgomery	Jeff Torrence, ILB	Jr.	6-1	230	2L	Atmore
Jeff Foshee, ILB	Sr.	5-9	207	3L	Millbrook	Lance Tucker, QB	Fr.	6-0	175	RS	Fayette
Will Friend, OG	Fr.	6-3	270	RS	Philadelphia, Miss.	Eric Turner, SS	Jr.	6-1	200	2L	Fort Payne
Willie Gaston, S-CB	Sr.	5-11	183	2L	Mobile	Taurus Turner, FB	So.	6-1	200	1L	Fort Payne
Ron Gibson, CB-RB	Jr.	5-11	180	Tr	Brewton	Dameian Vallery, RB	Fr.	6-2	200	RS	Aldine, Texas
David Goss, QB	Fr.	5-11	175	RS	Warner Robins, Ga.	Edgar Walker, DE	Fr.	6-4	250	RS	Dothan
Patrick Hape, TE	So.	6-4	240	1L	Killen	John Walters, ILB	Jr.	6-2	225	2L	Dallas, Texas
Joey Harville, OT	Sr.	6-5	285	3L	Moulton	William Watts, PK	So.	6-1	180	1L	Pleasant Grove
Tracy High, CB	Jr.	5-9	175	1L	Pontotoc, Miss.	Marcell West, FL	So.	5-11	177	1L	Niceville, Fla.
Joel Holliday, OT	Fr.	6-4	275	RS	Six Mile, S.C.	Matt Wethington, PK	Sr.	5-11	176	1L	Titusville, Fla.
Dameian Jeffries, DE	Sr.	6-4	274	3L	Sylacauga	LaRon White, OG-C	So.	6-2	272	1L	Courtland
Tommy Johnson, CB	Sr.	5-10	180	3L	Niceville, Fla.	Sherman Williams, RB	Sr.	5-10	193	3L	Mobile
Tony Johnson, TE	Jr.	6-5	248	2L	Como, Miss.	Rock Woody, CB	Sr.	5-10	180	1L	Springville
Chris Jordan, OT	Fr.	6-6	290	RS	Jackson	Note: Class listed is football class for 1994 season.					
Chad Key, SE	Jr.	6-4	210	1L	Parrish	*Tentative					

Pitts & Peck-Love:

Winning Comes Naturally

by Donald F. Staffo

Tide seniors fit typical junior college transfer mold with strong play

The Alabama basketball program periodically has dipped into the junior college ranks to find a plum. Familiar names from the recent past include Latrell Sprewell, David Benoit, Alvin Lee and James Sanders. This year's recruiting included landing another junior college signee, Marco Whitfield, and gaining a commitment from yet another, Chris Davis.

This year's Crimson Tide has only two scholarship seniors, and both are junior college transfers. Shon Peck-Love and Walter Pitts haven't made anyone forget Sprewell (who was selected for this year's National Basketball Association All-Star Game), but they have performed at a high level.

Peck-Love, who prepped at Tuscaloosa Central High School before heading to Three Rivers Community College in Missouri, is the permanent captain of this year's team and a starting small forward. Pitts, a product of Auburn-area Loachapoka High School before going to Tyler Junior College in Texas, is the co-captain and a top substitute at both guard and forward in the Crimson Tide rotation.

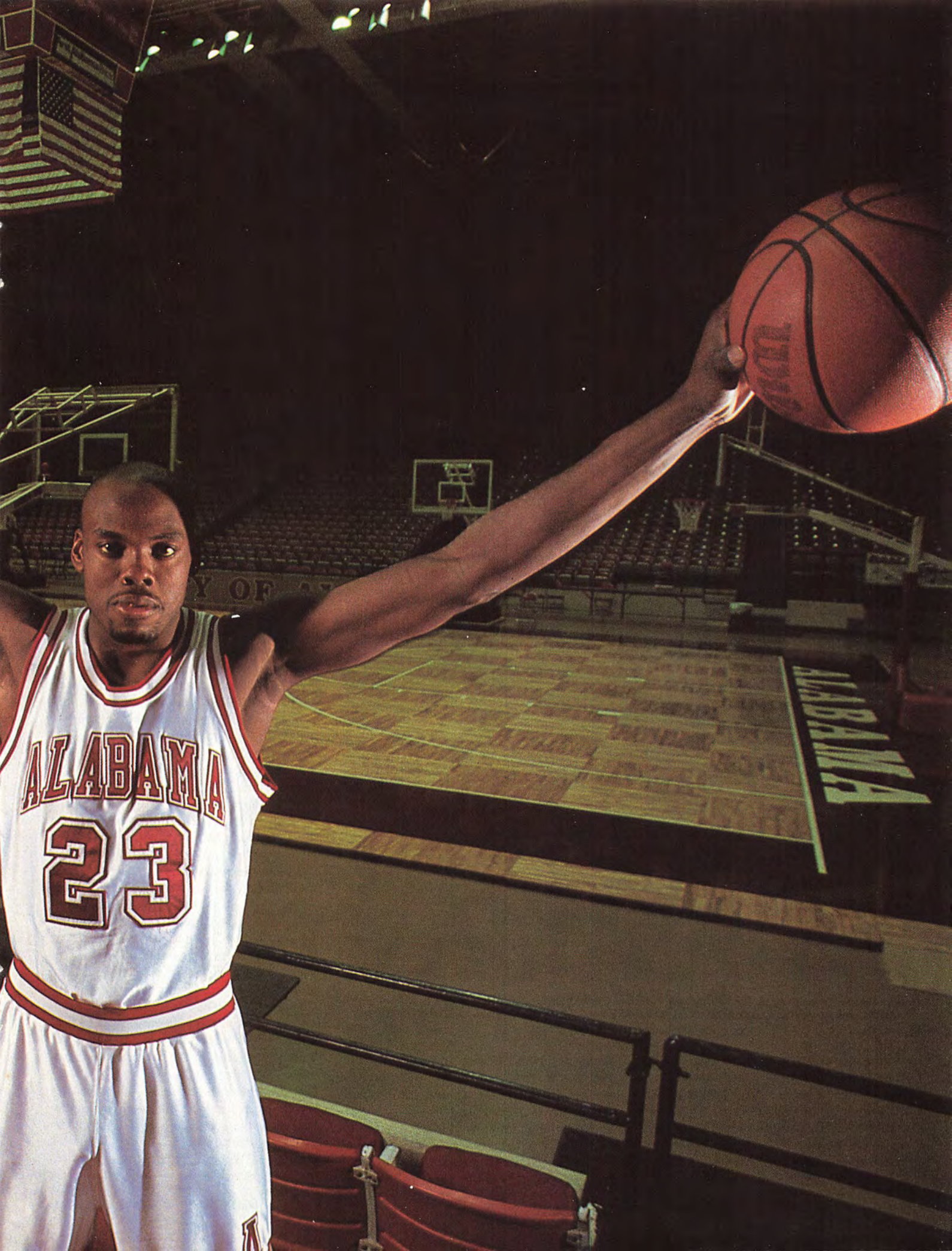
"Both of these guys have helped stabilize the team," said Alabama Head Coach David Hobbs. "They talk to our younger players and have become spokesmen for the team, and I think they have really been effective doing that. They have been through it. They have been to Auburn to play, to the 'Deaf Dome' at LSU and places like that, and they tell our younger players what to expect.

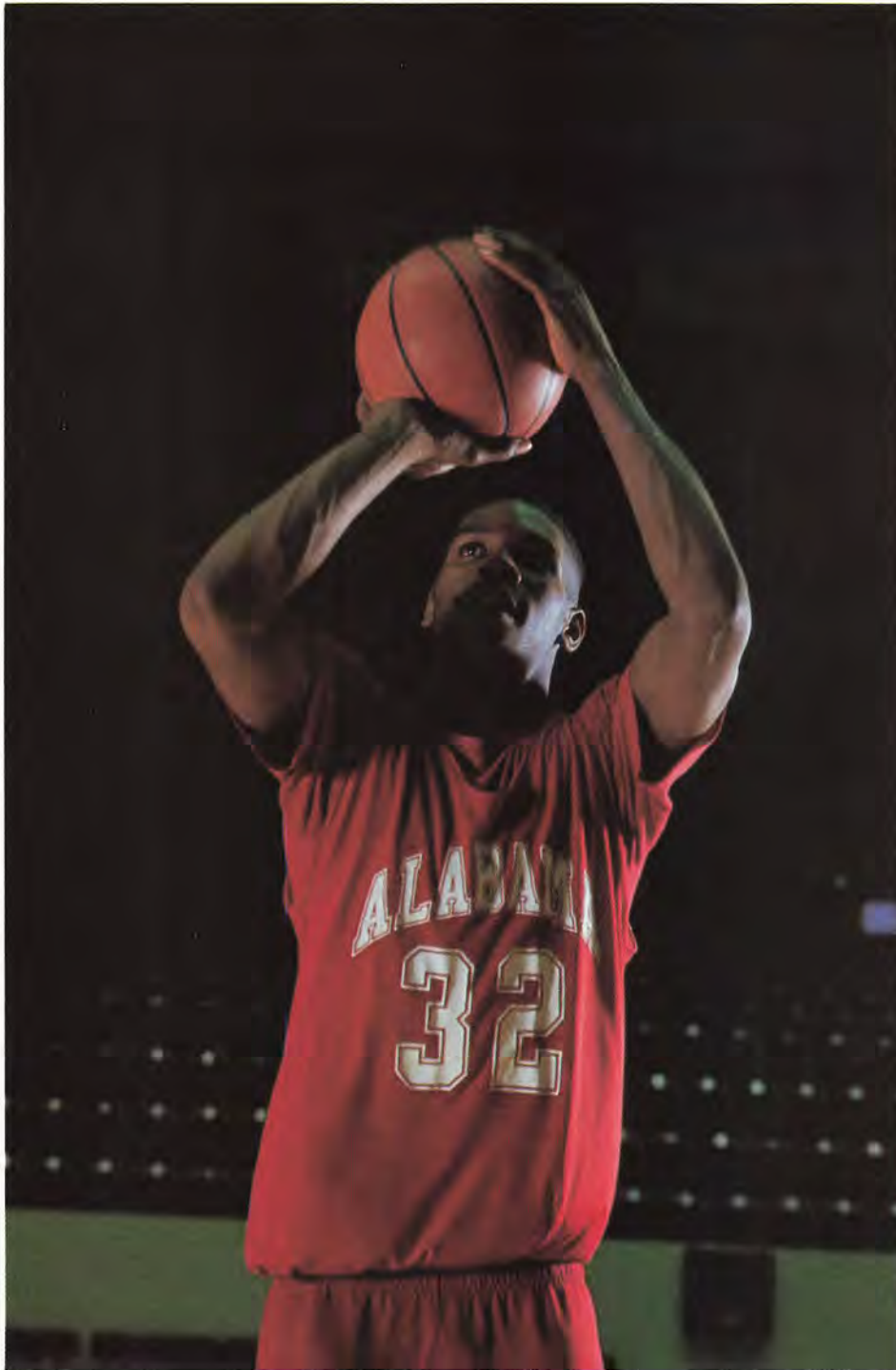
"They also talk to our players who aren't

Walter Pitts, a senior who transferred from Tyler Junior College, is an exceptional athlete known primarily for his defensive work for the Crimson Tide basketball team. However, he is also making an impact on offense.

Barry Fikes Photo







Shon Peck-Love grew up in Tuscaloosa and starred at Central High School, but took a couple of years of junior college seasoning before returning to become a starter for the Crimson Tide basketball team.

Barry Fikes Photo

playing as much as they would like and try to explain to them what it takes."

In addition to providing leadership on and off the court and what shows up on the statistics sheet, Peck-Love and Pitts have made other key contributions as Alabama turned its season around this year.

Hobbs said, "I think Shon is a guy that has

really accepted his role on the team, and that role is for the small forward to defend against one of the better, and many times one of the more athletic guys on the other team. As for scoring, we just tell him to do what he can to help us. He's also made some big baskets. Two that come to mind are the two big, big three-point shots in the first

half against Auburn when we were down 14 points. But Shon's major strength is that he's willing and able to provide the leadership that we need from a defensive standpoint."

When Peck-Love is not in the game, it is usually Pitts' job to shut down one of the opponent's better offensive players. "If they're both in the game at the same time, they guard two of the better players," Hobbs continued. "If only one is on the floor, his responsibility usually is to control their best perimeter player, unless that player is a point guard."

Hobbs said that Pitts, besides defensive contributions, has improved his outside shot and does an excellent job getting key offensive rebounds and making clutch free throws.

"Shon and Walter bring a lot of other things to the table, including hard work and hustle," Hobbs said. "And when the other guys, especially the younger ones, see them working hard, they'll work harder too."

Peck-Love and Pitts both said they benefited from their junior college experience. "Things worked out for me," Peck-Love said. "I always wanted a chance to play at Alabama, and I got it. It's just two years instead of four. But by going to junior college I got to experience some things that I otherwise wouldn't have. So from that standpoint, it's been good."

"Also, when I came out of high school, Alabama was just loaded, so I probably wouldn't have gotten much playing time."

Pitts said that the junior college route better prepared him mentally, physically, and academically for the rigors of the Southeastern Conference, and like Peck-Love, enabled him to get two years of significant game experience which he otherwise would not have had.

"I came out of a small high school (32 people in the senior class), so jumping right into Division I would have been difficult for me," he said. "I played right away in junior college, and that prepared me for this level."

Both also reinforced at junior college what they learned in high school—how to win. Peck-Love was first-team all-state and state tournament Most Valuable Player as he led Central to the 1990 Class 6A championship. He repeated that at Three Rivers (35-3) where he averaged 20 points and eight rebounds per game. In the national junior college tournament, he had another MVP performance, which included a dramatic last-second block that won the game, leading the Raiders to the junior college national championship. Peck-Love picked the Tide over Oklahoma, Wyoming, and Tennessee State, "mainly so my mom (Laura) and dad

(Johnny) could see me do good. Because what makes them happy, makes me happy."

After twice leading Loachapoka to the Alabama IA state championship, Pitts averaged 15 points per game and eight rebounds as Tyler Junior College (22-7) won the Texas Eastern Conference Championship. Following a high school career where he scored over 2,000 points and was a three-time all-stater—resulting in his jersey being retired—Pitts became a two-year junior college all-conference performer. He chose Bama over Virginia Commonwealth and Oklahoma.

"It was a dream come true to have a chance to play at a place where I always wanted to play," said Pitts.

Coincidentally, Peck-Love and Pitts played against each other in a junior college post-season all-star game. "That was the first time I met Shon," said Pitts. "He had already committed to Alabama and we talked about it."

Surrounded by a cast of stars at Alabama, the duo no longer has to carry the load the way each did at his respective school. Peck-Love, 6-5 and 200-pounds, averages about 7.5 points, 5 rebounds, and 2 assists for the Tide. He has been a starter the past two years and scored a career-high 22 points last season against Tennessee State, and in scoring and rebounding has recorded 10 double-double games.

The 6-2, 205-pound Pitts contributes 5 points and 4 rebounds a contest. The recipient of the 1993 Guy Lee Turner Memorial Defensive Award, he has starts only occasionally, but is considered a first-teamer as he is one of the top substitutes for the Tide.

Regarding the slow start the Tide got off to this season Peck-Love said, "I hate losing. It was our responsibility to get everybody back on track."

"I've been captain in high school and junior college, so it's a role that I'm used to."

Added Pitts, "Sometimes we get together with the guys in our room. When there is a problem on the team, Coach Hobbs looks for the team to tell us, and then we go to Coach Hobbs with the problem."

Peck-Love and Pitts share the same highlight from their Tide careers, upsetting then number one-ranked Arkansas. "Coach Hobbs stressed that they were one of the best three-point shooting teams in the country," said Pitts. "With Arkansas having Al Dillard and Scotty Thurman, Coach kind of put pressure on us to stop those guys."

"We responded to that challenge. When I held Al Dillard to three points, it was my best effort at Alabama."

Whereas Peck-Love will hang up his Crimson Tide uniform in March, Bama fans

may not have seen the last of Pitts in crimson and white when basketball season ends. Pitts was also an all-state football player in high school and received some recruiting overtures from the Tide football staff.

"If I don't get an opportunity to play professional basketball somewhere, I'm going to give football a try," said Pitts, a prep quarterback/defensive back. "Football is my favorite sport and when I go over to Bryant-Denny Stadium to see those guys play, I say to myself: 'I could be in one of those uniforms.'"

"Coach (Gene) Stallings and his staff know I'm going to try out."

In the past when Alabama has panned the junior colleges for prospects, they have struck gold, as in Sprewell (currently a 20 points-per-game scorer for Golden State in the NBA) and Benoit (with the Utah Jazz), or silver, as with Peck-Love and Pitts and some of the others. And that has been by design.

"We have gone and will continue to look to the junior colleges for players, depending on our needs," Hobbs said. "We look around and try to pick from a disciplined program that requires something out of a kid. We look for good players who are good people who come from good programs."

"There are pluses and minuses with junior college players. On the plus side, the guy has already seen a higher level of competition and he's more ready to play. He's been away from home, he's two years older, wiser, and stronger."

"On the minus side, he will only have two years in the program, and how effective he is will depend upon how he makes the transition."

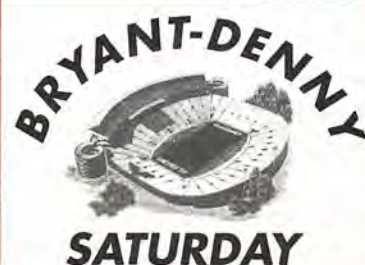
"Certainly you hope they can come in, be in your playing rotation, and make an immediate impact on your program. If they're not, they can become unhappy. If a guy has a hard time adjusting, we'll only get one year out of him."

"We have been fortunate to get guys who made an impact, but all have struggled a little bit making the transition. They all turned out to be much more complete basketball players the second year, compared to the first. That's been true of all of them."

"Familiarity is a factor. In the second year they know better what to expect from me, and I know what to expect from them."

"You can only take so many junior college players at a time," Hobbs said. "A nice mix is okay."

The Tide has two other junior college players on its roster this year, Artie Griffin from South Plains and Terrance Bethel from McLennan, both in Texas, both with another year to play.



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Losses Must Be Overcome

by Donna Fromme

Both women's and men's teams must replace stars

Leave it to Jim Tressler to find a positive. The 30-year old was lured from 1992 National Champion Florida's staff, where he was an assistant, to become head women's tennis coach at the University of Alabama. It was his dream come true.

The timing, however, could have been a nightmare. Former Crimson Tide Coach Karin Gaiser announced her decision to join her father's corporate staff in Ohio in late August. Her players arrived at school unaware that their coach had resigned. Assistant Coach Kay Thayer stepped up and coached the team during the Fall tennis season, trying to keep Alabama from missing a beat by bringing in recruits. Wheels were turning in the search for head coach the entire time, but it wasn't until November 15 that Tressler came on board. A lesser man might have found the timing inconvenient. Not Tressler. He even managed to sign a player by the November early signing deadline.

"It was an easy transition because I came in at a good starting point," said Tressler, who adopts a program that made its first trip to nationals last season. "The Fall playing season had just ended, and we moved straight into the conditioning program. It was hard in a way because we didn't start back out on the court until January 8 (the NCAA allowable date), so I feel like my season is only four weeks old whereas other teams and other coaches' seasons are now six months old. And when you are facing a tough schedule and want to be nationally competitive, that can make a difference."

The program Tressler has adopted is one that had bordered around collegiate tennis' Top 25 bubble for the past three seasons, finally breaking into the rankings in the last two. Last year, Alabama was selected as an alternate to the NCAA Championships then, in a history-making event, it was bumped into the championships literally at the last minute when a team was forced to withdraw because injuries had depleted it from fielding a full lineup.

From that event emerged Alabama's first female tennis All-Americans, Titia Wilink and Marouschka van Dijk. But graduation took its toll. Wilink, who'd been national-

ly-ranked in singles during her career as well as a senior, as was longtime No. 1 singles player Jenny Whalen and Brenda Coffin who'd played Nos. 5 and 6 singles. Another player, Chrissie Carter, decided to transfer to Ole Miss. That makes for a scenario where four of the team's top seven were out of the picture.

Tressler said, "It's going to be tough for us because we are a young team. Our three freshmen are expected to contribute right away. Ideally, I'd like to have a year to ease them into the collegiate tennis scene, but we are not deep enough to ease them in. They are playing right away, and in a way that is good because they are getting a lot of experience sooner than they would normally. In the long run, that's going to pay off."

Tressler will mix those freshmen, Cantillon Brasington, Allison Eager and Hilde Otterman, with three key players from Alabama's 1993 team. Van Dijk is back and has already found a successful doubles mate in Otterman. The pair already has begun slaying nationally-ranked duos. Back, too, is junior Lori Smith who broke into the national singles rankings and ended the year with 32 wins. And, battling Smith for the No. 1 singles slot is another player who has been nationally ranked during her career, senior Amy Mascotti.

"Amy is a great leader. She's been as willing to work hard as anybody on the team, and that's why she's our captain. The girls look up to her," said Tressler. "I think it's possible that we can pick up where Alabama left off last year. It's going to be tough because we lost a couple of our best players when their eligibility was up. We've replaced them with freshmen, so we are not as experienced as last year. But they are talented enough to make things happen. Our success depends on how quickly they respond and come around. With the ranked teams we play, our schedule is such that if we play well, we have a shot at getting in the field again at nationals."

Meanwhile, Tressler knows Alabama's success will come by steps.

"Overall, as a team they were very receptive to me when I first came here. Maybe they were a little nervous because they didn't know what to expect from a new coach. But they all worked hard, probably harder than they were used to, on our conditioning program. And I've made some changes in their individual games. And they've responded well to all of it."

"One of our goals is for each of them to improve in every match in the areas we are working on. A second goal is not to lose a

match because someone was better conditioned than we were. And our third, and biggest, is to qualify for NCAA's. I've been encouraged in all spots by all of our players so far, so I think we are moving in the right direction."

Four months ago, University of Alabama men's tennis coach John Kreis was a man sitting on a gold mine.

It was September, and with one exception, his team, an NCAA quarterfinalist in 1993, was returning intact. His returning All-America, Juan Carlos Bianchi, was ranked No. 9 in the nation in the pre-season singles rankings. His seniors, Cecil Brandon and Matt Turner, were nationally ranked in doubles. Brandon was also ranked in singles and Turner has been ranked at times throughout his Alabama career. In fact, so solid was Kreis' lineup that Alabama went into the Fall "pre-season" as the No. 7 ranked team in collegiate tennis.

But a not-so-funny thing happened along the way to the January beginning of the Spring dual season. Bianchi, a player with professional aspirations and a backhand to back it, worried that at age 24, time was a precious commodity for a man trying to make it in professional tennis. After spending his fall honing his game in Venezuela, Bianchi has decided to make his move now.

His loss, combined with the loss to graduation of his doubles partner and oft times nationally ranked singles player Rick Witsken, is a significant one to Alabama. And suddenly it changed Alabama's entire picture.

Bianchi meant points in both singles and doubles. Bianchi and Witsken went into the 1993 NCAA Championships as the No. 1 doubles seed and left as All-Americans. In that first year of Division I tennis for Bianchi, the transfer ended the season ranked No. 21 in singles—just one slot short of making the All-America cut there, too. The Intercollegiate Tennis Association tabbed him as Region III's "Player to Watch," and indeed he was a sight to behold. In a single afternoon at a home match in Tuscaloosa last year, Bianchi gunned down both the nation's No. 1 ranked singles player and joined Witsken to slay the nation's No. 1 ranked doubles duo.

"A lot of people are questioning how good we are now," said Kreis whose team, sans Bianchi, rankings dropped to No. 11 to begin the Spring season. "But I know that we've got a lot of depth. We've got some players who have stepped up already. If



Leading the Alabama tennis fortunes are Men's Head Coach John Kreis (left) and new Women's Head Coach Jim Tressler. Both coaches must take advantage of newcomers if the Tide teams are to measure up to past success. Barry Fikes Photo

some of the other guys decide to step up and play up to their ability, we will have a strong season."

With Bianchi gone, the battle is on for an anchor at the No. 1 singles spot. Brandon was the early favorite. He goes into March ranked No. 40 in the nation in singles and has been ranked since he was a sophomore. Last year his presence in Alabama's SEC match lineup meant a win—he was 12-0 against the conference. In fact, Brandon's racquet was gold in most every match. He ended the year with a 31-7 overall record playing in the top half of Alabama's lineup.

But, in a coach's dream scenario, he is finding a challenger for Alabama's top spot from newcomer Marco Mazzotta. Mazzotta, a sophomore, transferred to Alabama from Miami and has been an impact player right away. In January, he was a quarterfinalist in singles in both the National Collegiate Tennis Classic and the SEC Indoor Championships. In fact, he started his Alabama career in September with a 5-0 run.

Others, too, are eager to make their mark and return Alabama to the NCAA field. Among those are sophomores Kip Layman,

Mark Johnson and Marc Hayden, junior Anders Lindgren and Mohamed Elwany and senior Matt Turner. Turner has been nationally ranked in singles and will likely return to the top half. Newcomers, lured by Alabama's national success, include Cameron Cross, a 1988 Canadian doubles champion, Marco Vannotti and Slavko Djukic. Vannotti and Djukic joined the team in January. Vannotti's first time out was at the SEC Indoor Championships. He made it to the "B" flight finals there, posting a 3-1 record.

"The picture has changed quite a bit from September to now because instead of hitting the courts with a veteran team, our first match out we had four or five guys playing in either singles or doubles that weren't either regulars or even on the team last year," said Kreis. "That's a big change from what I initially anticipated would be at least four or five returning starters in the lineup. It doesn't necessarily change my aspirations for the team, but it is going to be a different time table in terms of putting the pieces together for us to have a solid lineup. But having a tough pre-conference schedule will

help and while every match is important, our goal is primarily to have things in place for our conference opener."

Alabama opens SEC play at LSU on March 13. Its dual schedule includes 10 home appearances and is highlighted by its hosting of the 1994 SEC Championships. The event, which will be free to the public, will be April 28 through May 1. The field promises to be no less than spectacular as it will include No. 1 ranked Georgia, No. 7 Mississippi State, No. 8 Ole Miss, No. 9 LSU, No. 10 Florida, No. 11 Alabama, No. 15 Kentucky, No. 20 (tie) South Carolina and Arkansas, No. 22 Tennessee and No. 39 Auburn. The lone unranked team in the conference is Vanderbilt.

The Tide finished 19-5 last season and advanced to the NCAA quarterfinals. It was Kreis' and Alabama's third trip to nationals. It has started the Spring season again among the elite of collegiate tennis as one of the teams invited to participate in the 1994 USTA/ITA National Indoor Team Championships. Alabama and Kreis were invited to that tournament in 1990. The Tide finished seventh that year.

Outdoor Season Fits Tide Strengths

by John Bradshaw

Women have a veteran team, while men will rely on talented newcomers

Alabama's track and field teams entered the 1994 indoor season with high hopes for what they could accomplish but somewhat different perspectives on how it would be achieved. Two months later, with the indoor season coming to a close, not much has changed.

The Crimson Tide women and men continue to build toward the outdoor season, which has a docket of events that is better suited to their strengths and offers a greater opportunity for team success.

The women will enter the season with much the same team they had in 1993. The Tide only lost three athletes to graduation and returns a very solid nucleus from a year ago. Head coach Doug Williamson is hopeful that a strong group of upperclassmen will provide the leadership necessary to put this team over the top.

"This is the final year for a fairly elite senior class," said Williamson. "We have six women who have combined for 27 All-America honors. That's about as heavy-duty a senior class as anyone in the country will have."

Expectations for the group are high. Not only do the women expect a lot from themselves, but some prognosticators have also expressed confidence in the abilities of this Crimson Tide team. *College Sports* magazine has released its preseason poll for outdoor track and field, and it has picked Alabama to fin-

ish fifth in the nation.

Alabama's sprinters will once again be very strong, led by seniors Stacy Bowen, Faith Idehen and Andria Lloyd, who return from the 4x100 team which was second in the nation last year. Bowen scored in the 200 at both 1993 NCAA Championships, while Idehen scored indoors in the 55 and outdoors in the 100. Lloyd qualified at 200 meters indoors and 100 meters outdoors.

With this talent solidifying individual scoring opportunities and also having the ability to run on the 4x400-team, the key to having an all-purpose sprint group is finding a fourth relay leg. The prime candidate to fill this slot is junior Petrina Lacey, a transfer from Wallace State Community College. At Wallace State, Lacey was a junior college All-America in four events. She has previous times in the 100 which would meet NCAA provisional qualifying standards.



Alabama senior Vicky Lynch, who has already earned 11 All-America citations, heads this year's strong women's track and field team. Solomon Amegatcher is a two-time Southeastern Conference champion in the 400. Barry Fikes Photo

Another strong possibility for relay support is sophomore Carmetia Mackey, who transferred in at spring semester from Southern University in New Orleans.

After losing the second and third-place 400-meter hurdlers in the SEC from a year ago, the Crimson Tide would have appeared to be in a rebuilding mode. With the addition of some talented newcomers, though, and the emergence of Donna Cargill, the women could be almost as solid in 1994. Brandi Nunez, a former runner-up at TAC Junior Nationals, could provide points in not only the SEC but also the NCAA meet. Former Alabama high school champion Meggan Crenshaw might also offer support in the conference, as could Cargill, who ran 60-second races at the end of last year and added much endurance by running cross country in the fall. Nunez is also a strong hurdler at 100 meters, winning the Keebler title as a high school senior.

Another very strong part of the Tide arsenal, the distance corps has several proven performers. Senior Vicky Lynch is one of the top middle distance runners in the nation and has 11 All-America honors to her credit. In distance events, Heather Shutt-Warner has been equally impressive with consecutive All-America performances in the 5000-meter run. Sisters Malin and Marie Ohlund have been vital to the success of the 4x800-relay the past three seasons and are strong runners up to 3000 meters. With the addition of cross country All-America Becki Wells, the Tide could also have one of the nation's best teams in the NCAA's newest event, the distance medley relay.

There are several more young runners who could contribute, as well. Freshmen Caroline Kerr and Tara Merritt are both solid 800-meter runners, while sophomore Ashley Patrick was an SEC scorer in the 10,000-meter run as a freshman. Newcomer Heather Weldon will add more quality depth to the group.

"The numbers are not tremendous, but the quality is exceptional," said Williamson of his field events personnel. Alabama has two solid horizontal jumpers in Andrea Daniel and Niambi Dennis, who have both previously qualified for the national championships. The triple jump is the stronger event for both women, who can each clear 42 feet. Talented long jumpers, as well, both are capable of leaping 20 feet, which could earn them points in the

conference.

In last year's outdoor season, Alabama met NCAA qualifying standards for every track event other than the 100-meter hurdles and the 10,000-meter run. The Tide should have at least as much depth again this year, leaving Williamson optimistic about what the team can accomplish.

"It's just a matter of how much the team comes together and produces on their abilities," he said. "Obviously, the potential is there for us to be a contender."

Though the Alabama men's team returns several proven performers from a year ago, the ultimate success of the 1994 team may depend on the achievements of some talented newcomers. A wealth of freshmen have the potential to make an immediate impact in the SEC and propel the Crimson Tide into the conference's first division.

"What will determine our fate at the SEC and NCAA levels is how much the young distance group contributes," said head coach Doug Williamson. "That's a tall order, but they're a talented bunch."

The sprints area has excellent potential with a strong foundation in two-time SEC 400-meter champion Solomon Amegatcher. Amegatcher is also the anchor for a solid 4x400-relay which also returns Omokaro Alohan and Henry Hagan. Alohan was runner-up to Amegatcher at the conference meet, and Hagan has twice scored in the SEC 400-meter dash. A strong fourth leg for that relay could make it one of the best in the country, and Brad McCuaig has the potential to do that. McCuaig returns to the team after taking a few years off and appears to have retained his great speed. As a freshman, he ran on the Tide's national champion 4x100 team.

McCuaig should also be a key part of the 4x100-relay again. With the addition of former Alabama high school champion Deon Irby and decathlete Kevin Stephen, Alabama could have another outstanding team in that event.

Alabama has not had an SEC scorer in the 110-meter hurdles since Keith Talley won the event in 1987, but that could change this year. Kevin Stephen comes in with excellent times and ability in the event, which could be his strongest of the ten in decathlon competition. Also showing great potential is Willie Gaston, a defensive back for the Tide football team. Gaston joined

the track team in 1993 after a two-year layoff and steadily improved throughout the season. He was less than half-a-second from making the SEC final.

If there is an area where the Tide coaches do not know what to expect, it is the distances, where only one of Alabama's 14 runners has collegiate experience in outdoor track. Junior Bob Watson holds that distinction and is the only non-freshman of the group. He earned All-SEC honors in cross country last fall and appears ready to lead this young contingent into track competition.

Several of the freshmen come in with impressive credentials, particularly Nick Middleton, who had the nation's fastest high school time in the mile last year. In longer distances, Brian Hesson and Faizal Emamaullee could have an immediate impact in the conference. Hesson is an outstanding cross country runner who was redshirted in the fall, and Emamaullee was the top Alabama harrier in 1993 before being slowed by injury. Sam Barall, Michael Dryer, Preston Hill, James McIngvale and Jeff Ort headline a group of other possible contributors.

Though Alabama has great talent on the track, its best chances for quality points rest in the field events. The Tide returns four All-Americans, all capable of placing with the best in the nation in their respective events. David Nti-Berko and Joakim Nilsson accounted for all of Alabama's points at the 1993 NCAA Outdoor Championships, while Brian Thomas and Andrew Owusu did the same the previous year.

These athletes provide Alabama with two of the nation's best tandems: Owusu and Nti-Berko in the triple jump and Owusu and Thomas in the long jump. Nilsson has steadily improved in the javelin and had another personal-best throw over the summer. He was in second place going into the NCAA final and finished fifth. Also in the field events group are Garette Flowers, who could be a contender if he recaptures the form that earned him second place in the SEC indoor high jump, and Chip Johnson, who has come close to scoring in conference pole vault competition.

"The bulk of our points should come from the older, more experienced athletes," said Williamson. "A first division conference finish depends on quality points, and we have the personnel to get those. We might not be able to win the SEC, but we have enough talent to be a factor in determining who does."

Looking For A Little More Offense

by John Barnes

Senior pitched well last year, but lack of run support led to 3-6 mark

Baseball really is a game of inches. Just ask Bernie Bellard. Although the senior right-hander posted a 3-6 record for Coach Barry Shollenberger and the Crimson Tide baseball team in 1993, both Bellard and Shollenberger are quick to point out that it could just as easily been 6-3 or better.

In fact, Bellard's hard-luck season typifies Bama's disappointing 27-25 record in 1993. A consistent lack of run support, coupled with minor but nagging arm problems, prevented Bellard from enjoying the success that has been commonplace throughout his career. Of Bellard's six losses last season, three were by only one run, proving that even the best pitcher is only as good as his run support.

For the Lafayette, Louisiana, native, Bama's 1993 campaign was disappointing, but not without its moments. Bellard pitched well; good enough to win anywhere from six to nine games for most teams. Alabama, unfortunately, did not hit like most teams. With only two players on the Alabama team cracking the .300 mark, Bellard was rarely afforded the luxury of pitching with a lead, an element vital to being successful on the mound.

Bellard, however, refuses to point fingers. "It was a frustrating year," he said. "The thing is, just about everybody suffered at the plate last year. We just couldn't seem to get three or four guys hot at the same time. The guys who you would expect to hit the ball, people like Frank (Menechino) and Brad (Oliver) just couldn't seem to get it going. You can't win if you can't score and we sure proved it last year."

Still, Bellard showed flashes of brilliance that made him one of the hottest prospects in Louisiana following his senior season at Acadian High School in Lafayette. Drafted by the Houston Astros out of high school, Bellard took the advice of Astros scouts and enrolled at Chippola Junior College in Marianna, Florida.

In his two years at Chippola, Bellard posted an eye-opening 19-2 record and caught the eye of college coaches throughout the South. Among them was Shollenberger. Shollenberger, however, was more interested in Bellard's teammate, pitcher Bobby Jones. (Although offered a scholarship by Shollenberger, Jones elected to forego his final two years of eligibility and sign a professional contract.) In fact Bellard was discovered quite by accident.

"We were familiar with Bernie," said Shollenberger. "But at the time, we only had one available scholarship and we planned to offer it to Bobby Jones. Bernie came with Jones for his visit and we decided to give him a look. Although his throwing motion was a little unorthodox, he threw the ball extremely well. He had good control and better than average velocity. I was so impressed, I went ahead and offered him a scholarship, even though we didn't have one available at the time."

Shollenberger's gamble paid off. Bellard threw the ball well in 1992 fall practice. Despite a nagging bout with tendonitis in both his elbow and shoulder, Bellard worked his way into the Bama rotation and emerged as the Tide's number two pitcher behind lefty Al Drumheller last season.

Shollenberger demonstrated his faith in Bellard, naming him the starter in Bama's season opener at South Alabama. Bellard responded in kind, pitching six strong innings but winding up the loser as the Tide dropped a hard-fought 4-3 decision. The one-run loss was not only hard to swallow for Bellard, but served as a precursor to what would ultimately be a season of near-misses and one-run heartbreaks.

It was one month later when Bellard pitched again, starting the opener of a three-game set with Michigan. Again, he pitched well enough to win, but his team-

mates could manage only two runs and he once again found himself the loser as the Wolverines bested the Tide, 4-2.

As Bama's first Southeastern Conference series drew near, Bellard found himself in an unfamiliar position: 0-2. Slated to pitch the final game in a three-game set with Kentucky, Bellard finally got the run support he needed as the Tide squeaked out an 8-7 victory over the Wildcats. Although Bama dropped the first two games, Bellard had his first career victory at Alabama.

Strangely enough, Bellard does not consider it one of his better outings. "We won the game and that's what matters," he said. "But we gave up seven runs and I really don't feel like I pitched all that well. Still, I got that first win under my belt and I think it really helped my confidence."

Bellard won his next game, an 8-6 decision at Vanderbilt. It was arguably his best performance of the year, pitching six strong innings while striking out five and allowing only one earned run. More encouraging was the fact that Bama seemed on the verge of breaking out of its season-long hitting slump. It was not to be.

The following weekend, Alabama starting strong, notching a 7-0 victory over a good Georgia team in game one of a Saturday double-header. The euphoria was short-lived, however, as Bama could manage but four runs in the final two games, with Bellard dropping another close one in game two, 3-1.

Bellard would start four more games, losing to Mississippi State 2-0, Ole Miss 6-2, defeating Arkansas 10-1, and dropping another close one, this time to Auburn 2-1. His final record stood at 3-6, by far the worst of his career. He had plenty of help, however, as Alabama finished dead last in hitting in the SEC.

On a more positive note, Bellard's earned run average stood at a respectable 3.82, certainly good enough for at least a .500 won-loss record had

his offensive teammates shown some prowess at the plate.

"Bernie did everything we asked of him last year," said Shollenberger. "He threw the ball about as well as we could have expected. He had good control of his pitches and had the lowest ERA of any of our starters. To have an ERA below four and end up 3-6 is a shame."

In addition to his consistency on the mound, Bellard showed he could be an effective offensive weapon as well.

Continuing the tradition started by Joe Vitiello and Al Drumheller, Bellard is the latest Tide pitcher to help his own cause. Serving as Bama's designated hitter in a number of games last season, Bellard posted .297 batting average, third best on the team. He slammed two home runs and drove in 11, giving Bama some extra pop at the plate, albeit with a limited number of at-bats.

No decision has been made on whether Bellard will continue as the

Tide's designated hitter. Shollenberger hopes the DH spot will be filled by a number of deserving young position players. "I'm not saying Bernie won't have an opportunity to hit because he will," said Shollenberger. "But we've got some kids that could easily fill that spot. I hope we can get to the point where Bernie can worry about his pitching and nothing else."

One thing is certain. Bellard is the Tide's number one pitcher going into the 1994 season. An enviable position, yes, but also one filled with pressure. "I think I've proven I can pitch at this level," he said. "I was with in just a few runs of having a good year in '93. If we can manage a little more offensive productivity, it ought to be a good year."

Shollenberger, who has seen a few good pitchers in his time, offers high praise for Bellard. "Bernie has the standard stuff for a college pitcher (fast ball, curve, slider, change-up). He has good velocity (upper 80s), has good control and a very good command of the strike zone. His motion is not as fluid as a lot of guys and it tends to cause him to burn out a little quicker than I would like. That's why he's strictly a once-a-week pitcher. But I have all the confidence in the world in Bernie. His arm problems have gotten better and there is no reason why he can't win 10 or 12 games this year."

Bellard got the season started right as he went five innings, giving up two hits and no runs, and got the win in Bama's season-opening 3-0 win over New Orleans. Jerry Stubbs pitched four shutout innings in relief. The bad news is that Tide batters had only six hits and three runs.

If Bellard is to improve on 1993's 3-6 record, he will certainly need some help. An extra run here or there can make all the difference. Early returns suggest Bama will be an improved offensive team. How much is the question. Home series' against SEC West powers LSU and Mississippi State should help, but the mark of any successful team lies in its ability to win on the road. Bellard will get his chance. If the run support comes through, and there is no reason to think it won't, he could have a truly outstanding year.

Although Bernie Bellard is an outstanding hitter, Alabama Head Coach Barry Shollenberger hopes his senior pitching star can concentrate on just pitching in 1994. Bama has a history of top pitchers also being among the Tide's best hitters.

University of Alabama Photo by Kent Gidley



BAMA SCORECARD

The Tradition Continues

For many years it has been a tradition that the March issue of 'BAMA, which features all the latest Crimson Tide football signees, gives the earliest peek into 1994-95 football recruiting in Alabama.

Here are some upcoming high school seniors in the state of Alabama whom you can expect to see on recruiting lists next year:

Barrett Askew, linebacker, Lanett; Robert Burroughs, linebacker, Fultondale; Pernell Davis, defensive lineman, Birmingham West End; Corey Freeman, offensive lineman, Fairhope; Steve Hayden, running back, Millport South Lamar; Steven Kelly, running back, Enterprise; Robert Kilow, wide receiver, Daleville; Jason McDonald, offensive lineman, Theodore; Justin Norris, lineman, Parrish; Cencade Pennington, running back, Charles Henderson of Troy; David Pleasants, linebacker, Monroeville Monroe County; Dawud Rasheed, running back, Birmingham Shades Valley; Quinton Reese, wide receiver, Birmingham West End; Terrence Simmons, offensive lineman, Prichard Vigor; and Steve Stanley, quarterback, Leighton Colbert County.

Academics Gets Tougher

Academic requirements for NCAA college athletes go up next year. This year a prospective student-athlete had to have at least a 2.0 grade point average in 11 core curriculum courses (English, mathematics, etc.). Next year he or she must have a 2.5 grade point average in 13 core curriculum courses. The standardized test minimums with a 2.5 grade point average remain the same, 17 on the ACT, 700 on the SAT. Although there is a sliding scale in which a prospect may have a slightly lower grade point average with a higher standardized test score, in the state of Alabama students generally fare better in the classroom than on the standardized tests. And next year prospects who have not passed the ACT or SAT won't be allowed to take official visits (visits paid for by the school).

What To Get . . .

Alabama was particularly successful in 1994 in signing linebackers (some of whom will not be linebackers) and offensive linemen.

Best guess is that a priority of recruiting in 1994-95 will be for defensive backs and wide receivers.

. . . And Where to Get Them

Although the Alabama Crimson Tide football program has been built primarily on the strength of in-state performers, and always will be, the best Bama teams have also included a few out-of-state players. This year Alabama spent much recruiting time in Texas and just about drew back a nub. Alabama signed only one of the four players who committed to the Tide.

With Atlanta about a three hour drive from Tuscaloosa, the Florida Panhandle about a five hour drive, and most of Tennessee a three-to-five hour drive, look

for Bama recruiters to spend more time in the Southeast and less time in the Southwest.

Men Of The Year

The National Football League has a program of honoring its players for what they do off the field as well as what they do on the field, and the player selected each year is the NFL Man of the Year. For the third time, a former Crimson Tide football player has been honored.

Derrick Thomas, a fifth-year linebacker with the Kansas City Chiefs, was selected for the inner-city reading program, "Third and Long Foundation," which he founded. He spends Saturdays at Kansas City libraries reading to children. As part of his award, \$25,000 was donated to the foundation by the NFL.

Previous winners include former Alabama stars Marty Lyons, defensive lineman for the New York Jets, and Dwight Stephenson, center for the Miami Dolphins.

Thomas, an All-Pro performer each of his five seasons, was an All-America at Alabama and winner of the Butkus Award as the nation's top college linebacker in 1988.

Lettermen

Alabama had an extraordinarily high number of senior football lettermen, 30, part of the reason Alabama has an unusually high number of 1993 lettermen, 86.

The senior lettermen are punter J.J. Adams, tailback Chris Anderson, offensive guard William Barger, linebacker Jay Brannen, offensive guard John Clay, flanker Lorenzo Cole, offensive guard/center Dennis Deason, safety Chris Donnelly, safety Randy Gartman, center Chad Gladden, nose tackle James Gregory, linebacker Lemanski Hall, offensive tackle Matt Hammond, tailback Michael Hoven, linebacker John Hutt, quarterback Jason Jack, strong safety Greg Laney, cornerback Antonio Langham, split end Kevin Lee, strong safety Jackson Lowery, fullback Marcus Moring, linebacker Mario Morris, offensive guard Scott Mullinex, defensive end Jeremy Nunley, offensive tackle Roosevelt Patterson, snapper Matthew Pine, center Tobie Sheils, fullback Harold Swopes, linebacker Delan Trimble, and linebacker Thad Turnipseed.

The Tide's other lettermen were safety Michael Ausmus, quarterback Jay Barker, offensive guard Maurice Belser, linebacker Darrell Blackburn, defensive end Vann Boddin, defensive end Elverett Brown, defensive tackle Shannon Brown, linebacker Will Brown, linebacker Tyrell Buckner, quarterback Brian Burgdorf, defensive tackle Kendrick Burton, safety Blair Canale, center John Causey, split end Roman Colburn, cornerback Mickey Conn, strong safety Danny Davis, linebacker Fernando Davis, punter Bryne Diehl, offensive guard Pete DiMario, linebacker Lamont Floyd, linebacker Jeff Foshee, safety/cornerback Willie Gaston, tight end Patrick Hape, offensive tackle Joey

Harville, cornerback Tracy High, defensive end Dameian Jeffries, cornerback Tommy Johnson, tight end Tony Johnson, split end Chad Key, quarterback Freddie Kitchens, offensive tackle Kirk Lawson, fullback Tarrant Lynch, split end Toderick Malone, offensive tackle Kareem McNeal, defensive end Kelvin Moore, fullback/tight end Josh Niblett, flanker David Palmer, offensive guard Jeremy Pennington, defensive end Ozell Powell, placekicker Michael Proctor, linebacker Michael Rogers, linebacker André Royal, cornerback Cedrick Samuel, strong safety Sam Shade, linebacker Ralph Staten, tailback Brian Steger, offensive guard Jon Stevenson, linebacker John Tanks, offensive tackle Bryan Thornton, linebacker Jeff Torrence, strong safety Eric Turner, fullback Taurus Turner, linebacker John Walters, placekicker William Watts, flanker Marcell West, offensive guard Laron White and tailback Sherman Williams.

Spring Break

Billy Henderson gets a nice break from this year's spring football training schedule. Henderson is best-known for the 20 years he spent as a head coach in four different sports at Tuscaloosa High School. He coached both the basketball and football teams to state championships. He was also a highly-respected football and basketball official in the Southeastern Conference. However, it is for his work as a high school coach that the University of Alabama graduate is being inducted into this year's Alabama High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

That ceremony takes place March 21 at the Montgomery Civic Center.

Henderson is still active as an official, working Crimson Tide football practice each day. Fortunately, Alabama is not scheduled to practice the day of Henderson's induction.

Among the 14 being inducted is another Alabama graduate, Lou Scales, who coached championship teams for 38 years, 37 of them at Alexandria.

Spring Practice Schedule

Although it is subject to change, primarily because of weather, Alabama's spring football training schedule of 10 days in full gear and five of non-contact calls for work in shorts on March 10 and 14 and April 5, 12 and 15, and contact practices March 12, 16, 19, 22 and 24 and April 6, 8, 9, 13 and 16 (A-Day).

On The Docket

The headline in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* read: Mother now supports allegations made by ex-Alabama player Jelks.

That wasn't what the story said. The story said that Gene Jelks' attorney, Stan Kreimer, characterized the sealed deposition of Doris Jelks as supporting Jelks' original allegations. Oddly, in a sworn deposition by Jelks earlier, he recanted some of those allegations and, additionally, implicated former Auburn

booster Corky Frost, the man who helped put Auburn on probation again. Equally curious, when Jelks first made his allegations through Kreimer to the Atlanta newspaper, Mrs. Jelks denied them.

The affair continues because Jerry Pullen, a former assistant coach at Alabama who was originally accused by Jelks of having given him extra benefits to sign with and play for Alabama, is suing Jelks for defamation of character.

From Alabama's standpoint, the NCAA has been conducting a formal inquiry of the allegations. That inquiry calls for a written report to The University within six months of its beginning, which was September 22. Since the first available court date in the next step in the Pullen vs. Jelks case is not until late March, it now seems almost certain that the NCAA will continue its inquiry.

Signee Update

Marco Whitfield, the 6-0 point guard from Decatur who is playing at Central Florida Community College in Ocala, Florida, is having an excellent season, according to his coach, Gene Smithson. Whitfield, who signed with Alabama in November, is averaging 18.8 points, 5.3 assists, and 3.0 rebounds per game. He has started every game in a 19-9 season and averages about 35 minutes per game. He is hitting 48 per cent from the field, 38 per cent on three-pointers, and 82 per cent on free throws.

Alabama also got a commitment during that early period. Chris Davis, currently ranked the nation's number two junior college player, said he would sign with Alabama in April. He had knee surgery prior to the start of the season and got off to a slow start at Pensacola Junior College, but his coach, Bob Marlin, said he is playing well again, averaging about 16 points and 6.5 rebounds per game. Contrary to some published reports, Marlin also said that Davis' commitment to Bama is firm.

Orange Plaid?

Larry Donald, editor of *Basketball Times* and one of the nation's most astute observers of college basketball, mused on possible coaching changes in a recent column. He mentioned the possibility of Clemson going after former Alabama assistant Rick Barnes, now the head coach at Providence. But by far the most interesting thought Donald had was on the Tennessee situation, where it is expected Athletics Director Doug Dickey will be firing Wade Houston at the end of this year. Donald wrote:

"It would require some courage on Dickey's part, but if he really wanted to jump start the basketball program at Tennessee and give it a chance to be competitive in the SEC there would be just one candidate for the job—former Alabama Coach Wimp Sanderson.

"Not only would Sanderson get the program headed in the right direction, he would put some fannies in the stands as well. Of course, there would be some criticism of his final days at Alabama, but if all the facts of that case were put out on the table, I have to think the benefit of the doubt would be on his side. Remember, he made Alabama a national power and coached there for a long number of years without a hint of scandal in terms of NCAA look/sees.

"Wimp's the right guy, but, unfortunately, Tennessee's track record doesn't suggest it is smart enough to figure that out."

Three-Point Entry

Alabama women's basketball senior Betsy Harris, who ranks among the Southeastern Conference leaders in three-point shooting, is one of eight players from around the nation invited to participate in the National Women's Three-Point Shooting Championship. The event is held in conjunction with the men's Final Four and the sixth annual College Basketball Slam Dunk & Three-Point Shooting Championship. It will be held April 3 in Charlotte, North Carolina, and broadcast live on ESPN at 2:30 p.m. CST.

Harris is the second Alabama women's player invited to the competition. Amy Lannon competed in the inaugural event in 1992.

Harris has been about a 40 per cent shooter on three-point shots this year. Last year she led the SEC in three-point field goals made per game and three-point field goal percentage and set the league record for three-point field goals made in a season (89) and the SEC Tournament records for three-point shots made with 13 in three games and in a single game with seven against LSU. This year she hit a school record-tying eight three-pointers (helping her to a career-best 31 points) in Alabama's 84-71 victory over Auburn.

Alabama led the nation in three-point shots made per game in both 1992 and 1993.

The Other Recruiting Class

While the attention of most Alabama fans is riveted on football recruiting in the early part of each year, Bama football coaches are not the only ones collecting new talent.

Volleyball also signs new prospects on the first Wednesday in February and Bama Head Coach Dorothy Franco-Reed recruited what she believes is Alabama's best-ever class.

Alabama's three signees are: Nina Foster, a 6-2 middle hitter from Mission Viejo (California) High School; Hilary Kyle, a 5-7 swing hitter from Laguna Beach (California) High School; and Holly Richards, a 6-2 junior college All-America middle hitter from Wallace State in Hanceville.

Additionally, highly-recruited Nicole Chavez, a setter/defensive specialist from Daphne High School, has announced that she plans to walk on at Alabama.

Do you believe in bloodlines? Foster is considered the second-ranked high school player in California, which is far-and-away the leading producer of volleyball talent. Her ties to Alabama include being related to former Alabama star football players Ozzie Newsome and Johnny Davis.

This was Alabama's second recruiting effort for Richards. She originally signed with Texas out of Westminster Christian Academy in Huntsville, but transferred to Wallace State during her freshman season.

Bama returns all six starters from last year's 17-21 team. The 17 wins are the most by a Bama team since volleyball was reinstated at The Capstone in 1989.

Making The Grade

Alabama swimmers and divers proved to be as good in the classroom as in the water last semester. Thirteen members of the women's

team and 11 members of the men's team turned in grade point averages of at least 3.0. Four of those had perfect 4.0 averages. They were sophomore Amy DeVasher, freshman Ann Sofie Joensson, sophomore Ana Lindberg and senior Peter Doig.

Golf Achievements

Alabama Head Men's Golf Coach Dick Spybey and Tide Women's Golf Coach Betty Palmer have both been selected to prestigious positions in their sports.

Spybey has been elected vice president of the Golf Coaches Association of America. He will automatically become president of the association in 1996. The GCAA has some 400 members and includes all collegiate golf coaches. As vice president he will be in charge of supervising more than 20 committees, including the legislative, NCAA tournament, All-America and Academic All-America committees.

Palmer has been appointed to the NCAA Men's and Women's Golf Committee. The 14-member board is primarily responsible for conducting all national collegiate golf championships. She will chair the Advisory Committee for the South Region. Her four-year term begins in September.

Gymnast Coming Back

In Alabama's season-opening gymnastics meet, All-America Kara Stilp suffered a dislocation of the fibula at the knee joint. Doctors have cleared her to practice and there is a chance she will return to competition, perhaps as early as the February 25 Florida meet. The injury occurred when she landed on her knees on the second tumbling pass in her floor exercise routine. Before the injury, she had scored a 9.725 on vault and a 9.8 on bars.

It is believed that if she is able to return to all-around competition, she will be back on the team this year. If she is not able to return in all events, there is a chance the senior would be redshirted.

Gymnast Leaves

The Alabama gymnastics program is accustomed to losing players to injury, but this year's injury-plagued team has also lost a performer for "personal reasons." Gretchen Stockley, a junior from Earlville, Illinois, left the program for reasons not related to gymnastics.

Bill Young

Alabama's 1934 football team went 9-0 in regular season and was selected to play powerful Stanford in the 1935 Rose Bowl. Newspapers of the day were full of stories that Bama was unworthy to play Stanford, and those stories reportedly played a part in Alabama motivation.

En route to Pasadena, the Tide got more motivation. Bill Young, a center for Alabama, became ill, and the Alabama train had to make an emergency stop in Texas for Young to have his appendix removed. Alabama players vowed to win the game for Bill Young. Final score: Alabama 29, Stanford 13.

Young went on to play for the Washington Redskins and to coach at Furman. On January 21, Young, 79, died at his home in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.

Alabama's 1993-94 Winter Sports Results

Men's Basketball

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
79	*Levski-Totel of Bulgaria	65
102	*Spirit Express	90
57	Chattanooga	67
70	@ Washington State	76
86	Northwestern State	85
96	Florida A&M	58
62	@ Southern Miss	79
	Low Country Classic @ Charleston, S.C.	
82	Delaware State	44
60	Charleston	82
66	@ South Carolina	82
66	Arkansas	64
73	Vanderbilt	67
54	@ Ole Miss (JP)	70
104	Tennessee-Martin	68
71	@ LSU	67
69	Florida	61
74	@ Auburn (ESPN)	69
70	Mississippi State (JP)	69
67	@ Kentucky (JP)	82
78	@ Georgia (JP)	77
75	LSU (ESPN)	66
88	Mercer	63
81	@ Arkansas (JP)	102
84	Tennessee	70
Feb. 23	Tennessee State	7:30
Feb. 26	Ole Miss	1:30
Mar. 2	@ Mississippi State	7:00
Mar. 5	Auburn	1:30
Mar. 10-	SEC Tournament	
Mar. 13	@ Memphis	

*Exhibition game
All times central

Women's Basketball

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
69	*Levski-Totel of Bulgaria	63
91	*Athletes In Action	87
	Cyclone Classic @ Iowa State	
82	Eastern Washington	62
99	Iowa State	57
	Shoney's Classic @ Tuscaloosa	
98	Coppin State	31
81	Grambling	50
86	@ East Tennessee	65
99	Louisiana Tech	77
	Central Florida Classic @ Orlando	
107	East Carolina	53
83	North Carolina	89
87	Florida State	33
70	Georgia	57
79	@ Illinois	68
73	@ Vanderbilt	77
119	@ Troy State	43
75	Florida	80
101	Mercer	46
94	@ South Carolina	77
92	South Alabama	54
91	LSU	74
75	@ Arkansas	82
69	@ Tennessee	85
96	Kentucky	82
84	Auburn	71
68	Mississippi State	55
Feb. 23	Alabama State	5:00
Feb. 26	@ Ole Miss	7:00
Feb. 28	Troy State	7:00
Mar. 4-	SEC Tournament	
Mar. 7	@ Chattanooga	

*Exhibition game
All times central

Gymnastics

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
194.0	Auburn	188.575
192.15	@ Arizona State	192.60
192.15	Stanford @ Arizona State	189.625
192.125	@ Kentucky	188.325
194.0	Georgia	195.275
193.95	Penn State	192.275
194.275	@ LSU	194.275
Feb. 25	Florida	7:30
March 5	@ Auburn	7:30
March 12	@ Georgia	6:30
March 18	LSU	7:30
March 26	SEC Championships @ Auburn	
April 9	NCAA Central Region	
April 21-	NCAA Championships	
April 23	@ Salt Lake City, Utah	
All times central		

Men's Indoor Track

DATE	MEET	RESULT
Jan. 15	Saluki Invitational @ Carbondale, Ill.	Fourth
Jan. 21	Barnett Bank Invitational @ Gainesville	Seventh
Feb. 5	Purple Tiger Invitational @ Baton Rouge	Fifth
Feb. 11-	Sooner Invitational	
Feb. 12	@ Oklahoma City	non-scoring
Feb. 26-	SEC Championships	
Feb. 27	@ Gainesville	
March 5	NCAA Qualifiers Invitational @ Gainesville	
March 11-	NCAA Championships	
March 12	@ Indianapolis	

Men's Swimming & Diving

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
129	@ Clemson	114
117	@ South Carolina	126
162	LSU	81
125	@ Iowa	175
Dec. 3-	Rammer Jammer	
Dec. 5	Invitational	
104	Florida	137
136	@ Florida State	106
154.5	North Carolina State @ FSU	88.5
103	@ Auburn	139
129.5	Tennessee	113.5
Feb. 16-	SEC Championships	
Feb. 19	@ Auburn	Fourth
March 4	Kentucky	TBA
March 5	Alabama Invitational	TBA
March 11-	NCAA Diving Prelims	
March 12	@ Auburn	
March 24-	NCAA Championships	
March 26	@ Minneapolis	

All times central

Women's Swimming & Diving

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
132.5	@ Clemson	110.5
94	@ South Carolina	151
143	LSU	100
165.5	@ Houston	131.5
101	@ Texas	196
Dec. 3-	Rammer Jammer	
Dec. 5	Invitational	
94	Florida	135
127.5	@ Auburn	165.5
159	Tennessee	139
Feb. 16-	SEC Championships	
Feb. 19	@ Auburn	Third
March 4	Kentucky	TBA
March 5	Alabama Invitational	TBA
March 11-	NCAA Diving Prelims	
March 12	@ Auburn	
March 17-	NCAA Championships	
March 19	@ Indianapolis	

All times central

Women's Indoor Track

DATE	MEET	RESULT
Jan. 15	Saluki Invitational @ Carbondale, Ill.	First
Jan. 21	Barnett Bank Invitational @ Gainesville	First
Feb. 5	Purple Tiger Invitational @ Baton Rouge	Second
Feb. 11-	Sooner Invitational	
Feb. 12	@ Oklahoma City	non-scoring
Feb. 26-	SEC Championships	
Feb. 27	@ Gainesville	
March 5	NCAA Qualifiers Invitational @ Gainesville	
March 11-	NCAA Championships	
March 12	@ Indianapolis	

Alabama's 1994 Spring Sports Schedules

Baseball

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
11	* Alumni Game	3
	Winn-Dixie Showdown @ New Orleans	
3	UNO	0
3	Tulane	7
0	LSU	3
	Lake Area Classic @ Lake Charles, La.	
Feb. 25	McNeese	7:00
Feb. 26	Lamar	12:00
Feb. 27	Tulane	1:00
March 2	Austin Peay	2:00
March 3	Austin Peay	2:00
March 5	@ West Florida	7:00
March 6	@ West Florida	2:00
March 8	St. Louis	2:00
March 9	St. Louis	2:00
March 10	Notre Dame	2:00
March 11	Notre Dame	2:00
March 12	Notre Dame	2:00
March 15	Louisville	2:00
March 16	Butler	2:00
March 17	Butler	2:00
March 19	Michigan State	2:00
March 20	Michigan State	2:00
March 23	Middle Tennessee State	7:00
March 25	@ South Carolina	6:00
March 26	@ South Carolina	1:00
March 27	@ South Carolina	1:00
March 29	@ South Florida	6:00
March 30	@ South Florida	6:00
March 31	* Boston Red Sox	TBA
	@ Fort Myers, Fla.	
April 1	@ Florida	6:00
April 2	@ Florida	12:30
April 3	@ Florida	12:30
April 5	Alcorn State	2:00
April 6	Auburn @ Montgomery	7:00
April 8	Tennessee	7:00
April 9	Tennessee	4:00
April 10	Tennessee	2:00
April 12	Tennessee Tech	7:00
April 13	Troy State @ Dothan	7:00
April 15	Mississippi State	7:00
April 16	Mississippi State	4:00
April 17	Mississippi State	2:00
April 20	@ Alabama-Birmingham	6:05
April 22	@ Ole Miss	7:00
April 23	@ Ole Miss	1:00
April 24	@ Ole Miss	2:00
April 27	Alabama-Birmingham	7:00
April 29	LSU	7:00
April 30	LSU	4:00
May 1	LSU	2:00
May 3	Samford	7:00
May 6	@ Arkansas	7:00
May 7	@ Arkansas	7:00
May 8	@ Arkansas	2:00
May 11	Radford	7:00
May 13	Auburn	7:00
May 14	Auburn	4:00
May 15	Auburn	2:00
May 19-22	SEC Tournament	TBA
May 26-31	NCAA Regionals	TBA
June 3-11	College World Series @ Omaha	

* Exhibition Game
All times central

Men's Tennis

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
Jan. 20-23	SEC Indoor Championships @ New Orleans (Individual play only)	
1	@ Minnesota	6
5	Indiana @ Minnesota	2
4	Alabama-Birmingham	3
2	Miami	5
Feb. 23-27	National Indoor Team @ Louisville	
March 5	Middle Tennessee State	12:00
March 5	Southeastern Louisiana	2:00
March 13	@ LSU	1:00
March 17-	Blue-Gray National Classic	
March 20	@ Montgomery	
March 26	@ Tennessee	12:30
March 28	@ Ole Miss	1:00
March 30	@ Arkansas	1:00
April 2	@ Auburn	1:00
April 3	Kentucky	1:00
April 10	Georgia	1:00
April 14	@ Mississippi State	1:00
April 17	Florida	2:00
April 22	South Carolina	1:00

All times central and subject to change

Men's Golf

DATE	TOURNAMENT
Feb. 19-20	Gator Invitational @ Gainesville, Fla.
March 11-13	Golf Digest Invitational @ Houston, Texas
March 25-27	Southeastern Invitational @ Lagoon Park, Montgomery
April 1-3	Carpet Capital Classic @ Dalton, Ga.
April 22-24	Billy Hitchcock Invitational @ Auburn
May 13-15	SEC Championships @ Knoxville, Tenn.
May 19-21	NCAA Regionals @ Auburn
June 1-4	NCAA Championships @ Dallas, Texas

Men's Track & Field

DATE	MEET
March 25-27	Alabama Relays
April 7-9	Sea Ray Relays @ Tennessee
April 16	Gator Invitational @ Florida
April 23	Crimson Classic
April 29-30	Drake Relays @ Des Moines, Iowa
May 12-15	SEC Championships @ Arkansas
May 25	Twilight Qualifiers @ North Carolina
June 1-4	NCAA Championships @ Boise, Idaho

Women's Tennis

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
Jan. 21-23	Georgia Invitational @ Athens	
3	South Alabama	6
6	Oklahoma	2
1	@ Clemson	7
4	@ Tennessee	5
2	Kansas @ Arkansas	5
Feb. 20	@ Arkansas	11:00 a.m.
March 2	@ Vanderbilt	2:30
March 10	Purdue	2:00
March 12	LSU	12:00
March 18	Kentucky	2:00
March 26	@ South Florida	9:00 a.m.
March 27	@ Florida	9:00 a.m.
March 31	Wisconsin @ Miami	TBA
April 2	@ Miami	12:00
April 9	Georgia	12:00
April 10	Auburn	11:00 a.m.
April 12	@ Mississippi State	2:00
April 17	Ole Miss	12:00
April 23	@ South Carolina	TBA
April 27-	SEC Championships	
May 1	@ Arkansas	
May 11-15	NCAA Championships @ Georgia	

All times central

Women's Golf

DATE	TOURNAMENT
Feb. 21-22	Guadalajara Invitational @ Guadalajara, Mexico
March 4-6	San Jose Invitational @ Monterey, Calif.
March 25-27	Lady Gamecock Invitational @ Columbia, S.C.
April 15-17	Women's Southern Intercol. @ Athens, Ga.
April 29-	SEC Championships
May 1	@ Old Waverly, West Point, Miss.
May 12-14	NCAA Regionals @ East Lansing, Mich.
May 25-28	NCAA Championship @ Portland, Ore.

Women's Track & Field

DATE	MEET
March 25-27	Alabama Relays
April 7-9	Sea Ray Relays @ Tennessee
April 16	Gator Invitational @ Florida
April 23	Crimson Classic
April 29-30	Drake Relays @ Des Moines, Iowa
May 12-15	SEC Championships @ Arkansas
May 25	Twilight Qualifiers @ North Carolina
June 1-4	NCAA Championships @ Boise, Idaho

Tide Golfer Greg Letson Is On His Way Back

He admits it may be wishful thinking. After all, Alabama golfer Greg Letson spent 30 days in a hospital in November and December recovering from near-fatal injuries he sustained in an automobile accident.

But while for a time he was out, Letson is anything but down.

Barely a month after his release from the hospital, he's back swinging a golf club and planning for his return, a return he says he hopes can be made by the time Alabama travels to Houston for the March 11-13 Golf Digest Invitational.

"I've been doing a form of swinging for a couple of weeks now," said Letson, whose injuries included a broken pelvis, broken ribs, broken fingers on his left (dominant for a right-handed golfer) hand, a head injury, and a loss of 30 pounds. "I'm taking shoulder high swings now because of my fingers, and doing some chipping and putting. I hadn't had all 10 fingers around a club until (February 13th), and that was a big moment.

"If you'd have told me that out of all those injuries the worst thing of all would have been breaking two fingers, I'd have thought you were crazy. But that's been the hardest part of coming back, because I couldn't bend them around the club. I don't think my lower body is working exactly the way it's supposed to, but it is working. I'm not counting out our trip to Houston, but

maybe getting back that fast is wishful thinking. But I know by the time we go to Montgomery for the Southeastern Invitational (March 25-27) I'll be back. I got a letter at home from The Farm (in Dalton, Georgia), where we play the first week in April, and it said they were sorry I wouldn't be there. I guess I'm going to have to hand them the letter back when I get the trophy."

Letson's comeback has been an inspiration to his teammates. Last fall the junior from Florence was the Tide's leading scorer, averaging 72.4 in four tournaments as Bama forged a top 20 ranking. A few days following the final fall tournament, Letson's car was struck broadside by an ambulance whose siren was not on. Few believed Letson would even be able to return to The University this spring, much less have aspirations of playing golf. On February 14 he practiced with his teammates for the first time.

"One of the neatest experiences of my life was seeing Greg hit a shot off the first tee," said Alabama Head Coach Dick Spybey. "It wasn't the greatest shot in the world, but knowing how far he'd come to make that shot made it one of the greatest. To see his back trucking up to the green carrying his bag was an uplifting experience for the whole team. I can assure you his will to return to the lineup quickly is pushing some of the younger players as well as inspiring some of the older players."

Letson has regained his lost weight. He

lifts weights three days a week with his teammates. And he also endures hours of physical therapy each week. The Academic All-Southeastern Conference performer is also on schedule to have all his missed school work caught up as he continues with this semester's academic load.

Spybey said, "Without question we're going to miss Greg's experience, his scoring and his leadership. But at the same time, his absence enables less experienced players the opportunity to showcase their talents, and many times that situation can work out very well. So we will continue to reach for our goals and attempt to achieve them without the immediate services of Greg. And when he is ready to get back in the lineup, he'll provide additional strength."

"Golf is the reason I'm here," Letson said of his return. "It's my means to an end. It's definitely been the incentive in my recovery."

"I don't feel bad about missing the first tournament because I have a reason," he said. "It's different than a few years ago when I was fighting for a spot (on the travel squad). I'm just trying to get back in the lineup as quickly as I can. I had a really good fall, and if I can play good this spring, I still believe there's a chance I can get all-conference, and maybe even All-America. I still believe all that is possible."

Considering how far he has come, no one should bet against how far Greg Letson can go.
—Donna Fromme

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The University of Alabama proudly presents
"The Interception" A Limited Edition Lithograph by
 Artist Daniel A. Moore



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"The Interception"
 ALABAMA—1992 SEC CHAMPIONS



Daniel A. Moore

Antonio Langham—Logan Field—December 5, 1992
 Daniel A. Moore



Image area 16"x25"

(Ticket Edition shown)

© 1993 University of Alabama

This Official Print of the historic 1992 SEC Football Championship visually documents the crucial game-winning interception/touchdown by Antonio Langham that clinched Alabama's thrilling 28-21 victory over The University of Florida. *The Interception* is the third in a series of paintings by University of Alabama graduate Daniel A. Moore commemorating the highlights of the 1992 Alabama football season. *Crimson Legacy*, depicting the first one-hundred years of football at the Capstone, and *The Tradition Continues*, which celebrates the National Championship, are already collector's items. Mr. Moore's latest work promises to be another treasured heirloom to be handed down to future generations of Tide fans.

True to his hallmarked style, the artist has beautifully captured the detail, grace and emotions of the inaugural SEC Championship Game. The University of Alabama has published the original oil painting as strictly limited edition lithographs under the personal supervision of the artist—insuring the fidelity of these exquisite fine art prints. *The Interception* is available in the following categories and prices:

REGULAR EDITION \$150. Each is embossed in 24-k gold with a specially designed SEC Championship medallion conveying the score of the game.
TICKET EDITION \$250. Each is imprinted with the handsome game ticket and flanked by the SEC Championship medallion and the University's Official Seal (as shown above). Ticket Edition print numbers will precede the Regular Edition print numbers.

ARTIST'S PROOFS \$450. Personally signed by Coach Stallings. Each will also bear the same items as the Ticket Edition. Numbered separately from other editions.

All prints are signed and numbered by the artist and accompanied by a Certificate of Authenticity and the artist's synopsis of the painting. Proceeds from sales of *The Interception* will benefit the University of Alabama's General Scholarship Fund and Paul W. Bryant Museum.

This offer is limited. Order now so you will not miss out on this timely opportunity to acquire one of these exquisite lithographs. *The Interception* is available only through the University of Alabama as a limited offer and is not available in stores.

ORDER FORM

The Interception

Limit of two prints per customer. (Prints offered unframed only - consult local framer for framing)

REGULAR EDITION	\$150.00	Quantity _____	Amount _____
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ARTIST'S PROOFS	\$450.00	Quantity _____	Amount _____

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